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Introduction to Lefort

by Dick Howard

The following essay stands at a double intersection in the work of Claude Lefort: its political thrust is determined by his activities in the group "Socialisme ou Barbarie," while the theoretical lessons drawn from that experience return to a series of earlier theoretical studies and point toward the direction that his thought has taken since then. The volume from which this essay is taken, *Eléments d'une théorie de la bureaucratie* (Droz: 1971), contains texts which for the most part are explicitly political; the majority of them appeared in *Socialisme ou Barbarie* or *Les Temps Modernes* between 1949 and 1958. To call one element of Lefort's work "political" and another "theoretical" is to draw a dichotomy which, in effect, Lefort would not reject. In the "Postscript" to the *Eléments*, which is printed here at his request, Lefort explains himself briefly.

While the following essay needs no introduction itself, the importance of Lefort's work, his political compatability with our own concerns and efforts, suggests the structure of this Introduction. That the group "Socialisme ou Barbarie" could have developed through its critique of Russia, of contemporary capitalism and of Marx-inspired attempts to overthrow it, a critical stance and a series of conclusions which after May 68 and the rise of New Left are becoming widely accepted suggests that we need to look more closely at the evolution of their thought, their theoretical approach and their conclusions. They represent a vital intellectual tradition ignored in this country, and only slightly known in France itself. Their development is closely related both to the political struggles and intellectual tradition of Marxism. This makes them familiar to a certain degree. At the same time, their language and style of theorizing is French. It is for this reason that the following remarks will aim at a *reconstruction* of Lefort's development, to make clear how he came to where he is today, and to permit the reader to enter gradually into his problematic. The earlier discussion of the Potlatch, for example, and the reading of anthropological data in general, may seem far afield; yet it will be seen to be intimately related to the later conclusions and ultimate rejection of Marxism. In this reconstruction, my goal is to present Lefort as much as possible in his own style; which will account for my own "style"—not so much scholarship as the reconstruction of an *oeuvre* in its internal logic.

In this sketch, I will not discuss the writings for which Lefort is already known among philosophers in English-speaking countries—his editions and Prefaces to the posthumous writings of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Merleau-Ponty was Lefort's high school teacher, his friend and co-worker; in a word

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which, as he says, we hardly have the occasion to use today: his master. They had disagreements, of course. For example, at the time of Merleau-Ponty's *Humanism and Terror* Lefort viciously attacked him as "Merleau-Stalino-Ponty."[1] But, through their disagreements, a human and intellectual fructification took place. The study of their mutual influence on one another would take us too far into the history of ideas; yet, whether it is in Merleau-Ponty's conception of Trotskyism, his insistence on the proletariat as the sum and substance of Marxism, his reading of anthropology, or his interpretation of Machiavelli, Lefort's influence cannot be missed. And, of course, the famous Sartre-Lefort polemic, in which Merleau-Ponty tended to side with Lefort, led to Merleau-Ponty's leaving *Les Temps Modernes* and, ultimately, writing the telling critique, "Sartre and Ultra-Bolshevism," which concludes his *Adventures of the Dialectic*.[2] The reader of Merleau-Ponty will see here too the influence of Lefort. But, of course, one should take Lefort at his word; if the influence was from Lefort to Merleau-Ponty, it was because Lefort already owed Merleau-Ponty so much! Philosophical debts are not easy to sort out; more important is the implication of the thought. This mention of Lefort's relation to Merleau-Ponty, intended only to suggest that the contemporary American reflection on Merleau-Ponty has perhaps missed his most profound contributions.[3] Merleau-Ponty's influence on Lefort, on the group "Socialisme ou Barbarie," and now on the editors of *Textures*, should lead to a re-evaluation.

In his polemical reply to the "ultra-bolshevist" panegyric, "The Communists and the Peace" which marked Sartre's political conversion (as he himself describes it in his essay on Merleau-Ponty), Lefort attacks Sartre's atomistic and voluntaristic conception of the proletariat. Following the stress of his earlier essays on the notion of the proletariat as its accumulating *experience*,[4] and presenting a subtle interpretation of Marx's analysis of the modern industrial process, Lefort points out that Sartre begins from the *idea* of the unity of the class, not the class itself; and Sartre ends up with the

1. Yet, as we will later demonstrate, the article of homage to Merleau-Ponty, "La politique et la pensée de la politique," shows a very different appreciation of Merleau-Ponty's often misunderstood work.

2. On the quarrel, cf. Sartre's "Merleau-Ponty," in *Situations*, IV, esp. pp. 257ff. It is hard to avoid adding here, in reference to this article, that Sartre seems never to have understood the radical novelty of Merleau-Ponty's philosophy. His continual categorization of Merleau-Ponty in terms of a longing for that primal happiness he lived in his youth may be interesting psychology—but it tells us little about Merleau-Ponty and much about Sartre.

3. My own article, "Ambiguous Radicalism: Merleau-Ponty's Interrogation of Political Thought," in Gillan, ed., *The Horizons of the Flesh* (Carbondale, 1973) is guilty of misunderstanding the importance of Merleau-Ponty's development after *The Adventures of the Dialectic* particularly as concerns the problem of the "flesh" and its implications for a radical philosophy of history.

4. This argument is developed particularly in "Le prolétariat et sa direction," and "L'expérience prolétarienne," both of which are reprinted in *Eléments d'une théorie de la bureaucratie* (Droz: 1971). In the latter article, Lefort attempts to develop a concrete methodology for the sociological analysis of what the experience and hence the consciousness of the proletariat in fact is, how it changes, etc.

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class as a pure act, without material conditions, by which the individual transcends him or herself to a social universality and therewith to freedom. Lefort stresses that this omits the *social*:[5] "in its premises, because it mentions only the individuals; in its conclusions, because it ends with a collectivity united by the same will, identifying itself in action, perfectly present to itself and clear to itself. But this is only apparently what is designated by a collectivity; in reality, it is nothing but an individual, or better, a consciousness."[6] Two central themes of Lefort's theoretical work already emerge here: (1) the notion that the self-transparence of the social is impossible—such self-transparence being the old rationalist dream of a perfect, God's-eye view, or the new dream of the bureaucracy; and (2) the attempt to pinpoint the *specificity of the social*, its relation to the individuals who institute it, and who are instituted by it. The political translation of a misunderstanding of this specificity is found not only in Sartre's naïve acceptance of the Party as incarnating the class from the standpoint of history; it is typical of what Lefort castigates, in an article of the same title, as "the method of the progressive intellectuals." From such a stance, the particular (individual, as well as the brute particular facts), and the historical are rendered separate; the historical, which is said to be the truth of the particular, its universality and the transcendence of its particularity, dominates the individual particular, whose action and errors appear as only incidents in the linear course of history. One then reasons about the choices posed by concrete historical situations.[7] The upshot is that the experience of the class is neglected and it becomes impossible to understand the possibility of autonomous activity. Instead, pure reason, or its inverse correlate, pure will, governs the historical process. Thus, summarizing his argument in the counter-polemic to Sartre's "Reply to Lefort," Lefort writes: "I accused you of confusing the party and the class, and I saw at the source of that error your incapacity to define the class as an economic, social and historical reality. I tied that incapacity to your narrow rationalism which locked you into the oppositions of activity and passivity, subjective and objective, unity and division; I thought that that rationalism prohibited you from understanding the idea of praxis, which you understood in

5. The term will be defined more precisely below. It might be noted that this definition of the specificity of the social against Sartre's idealism points to the importance of recognizing that the properly sociological deals with 2 plus n persons, as Benjamin Nelson points out. Recognizing this would have important implications for vogue styles like symbolic interactionism, phenomenological or ethnomethodological sociology.

6. In *Eléménts d'une théorie de la bureaucratie* (hereafter *Eléments*), *op.cit.*, p. 66.

7. For example, *Les Temps Modernes'* support for Gomulka as the only choice in the post-1956 situation, even though he was not helping to extend—quite the contrary—the movement that brought him to power. At least by saving the party, and acting cautiously to prevent another Russian invasion, he appeared to be giving history another chance. Or, to take another example, Lefort shows that applying the same "method" or presuppositions, transforms Sartre's apparently critical "The Ghost of Stalin" into a surface critique which doesn't go to the foundations of Stalinism but sees a series of errors and contingencies at the root of Russian political behavior.

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fact as the pure act of a pure organism, and which, in my opinion, supposes an interweaving of all of the economic, social and political determinations."[8] The suggestion here that rationality and the nature of the social mutually implicate one another is basic to the first thrust of Lefort's theoretical work, the investigation of anthropology.

In his 1951 article, "L'échange et la lutte des hommes,"[9] Lefort took the occasion offered by Lévi-Strauss' Introduction to the republication of Mauss's works to clarify his notion of reason and of the social. Mauss, he writes, "proves to be one of the most representative authors of our epoch which is attached to the project of defining a new rationalism in the sense of Hegel, Marx and Husserl. His constant preoccupation is not to explain a social phenomenon in terms of another which is judged to be its cause, but to tie together all the economic, juridical, religious and artistic traits of a given society, and to understand how they work together in the same sense" (p. 1400). Mauss's "Essai sur le don" studies nothing less than the foundations of society itself. Exchange is seen to be a "total social fact;" its sense is not only economic, but juridical, moral, religious and aesthetic. Exchange relations exist before the "economic" forms of reciprocity which

8. Aside from some nasty polemical remarks, Sartre's major point against Lefort is that Lefort denies mediation, seeing the proletariat in a crypto-Hegelian fashion. Sartre takes Lefort's notion of the accumulation of proletarian experience as following the image of the evolution from the seed to the flower to the fruit. Lefort would thus have a proletariat modelled on Wilhelm Meister or Marivaux's Marianne: through adversity it becomes education. Since Lefort insists that the existence of Stalinism cannot be the result of pure will nor of history acting, but rather that it must be accounted for through an analysis of the actual experience of the class, Sartre portrays his attitude as one of the pure intellectual consciousness standing outside the fray.

Sartre does effectively point to a problem in Lefort's position, though he neglects the nuances for polemical purposes. Now that Lefort has seen the problems with his understanding of the proletariat—cf. the Postscript below—Sartre's criticisms stand only as a warning, whereas Lefort's attack on Sartre remains valid despite the modifications that Sartre's *politics* seem to have undergone since then. Lefort is correct in pointing out that, though it stresses ambiguity, the Sartrean ambiguity is always *for consciousness*, subjective; and it can be cleared up once one chooses the path of history. For Lefort, Sartre leaves even Hegel, returning to Kant: "Where the best of Hegel is in his attempt to describe the becoming of Spirit, to show how activity develops within passivity itself, you reintroduce the abstraction of moral consciousness—not the least sure of itself, certainly, nor clear to itself, but transcendent in relation to all its determinations, pure activity permitting neither deliberation nor critique inasmuch as it coincides with its project of revolution" (*Eléments*, p. 92). And later Lefort continues: "That the proletariat is already a class at the level of the production process, but not in the least a completed synthesis, that there is a dialectic but not a finalism, that the activity of the vanguard organizations must be put within the dynamic of the whole [*ensemble*] while this does not in the least mean that there is an undifferentiated totality nor a miraculous spontaneity—it is clear that all this, which upsets the relation subject-object, is for you a 'magical thought' " (*ibid.*, p. 100). In effect, Sartre's position is nothing but a "social" exemplification of the dialectic of Self and Other; but already *Being and Nothingness* showed that such a dialectic, even in love, turns out to be antagonistic. Lefort's alternative will be discussed below.

9. "L'échange et la lutte des hommes," p. 1400. I am citing from an offprint of this article given me by Lefort; unfortunately, I cannot find the exact date of publication. The article was written in 1951. Further citations from this article appearing in this part of the text will be indicated by page number within parentheses.

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we know as barter. The *potlatch* is but one illustration of an exchange relation that cannot be explained in terms of economics alone; there are a manifold of others studied by anthropologists, which Mauss brings together in his article. To explain these social forms, one must go beneath the empirical. "Overall," writes Lefort, "the greatest error is to want to treat exchange as a fact" (p. 1406). Lévi-Strauss' Introduction to Mauss sees his importance precisely in this: in his early efforts at mathematization, and in his reduction of social phenomena to their symbolic nature. In Lévi-Strauss' reading, Mauss's importance lies in seeing that it is exchange itself, not the operations which are its manifestation, which is the crucial phenomenon. The task would be to analyze exchange itself, in order then to be able to understand its operational variations in terms of its own structure. This, however, verges either on a mechanical causal explanation, or a kind of Kantian transcendental consciousness which is to be the seat of the categories in terms of which alone the world of experience is possible. Lefort disagrees: "The unconscious, Lévi-Strauss tells us, would be the mediating term between me and the other person, because it gives us 'forms of activity which are at once *ours* and those of the *other*, conditions of all the mental lives of all men and of all times.' But this is to forget that from the perspective of such a collective consciousness, the notion of the other person—as, in fact, that of myself—has no longer any sense" (p. 1408). Lévi-Strauss' position returns again to a rationalism which dissolves the specificity of the particular in the universal. Hence: "what must be criticized in Lévi-Strauss is that he grasps in society *'rules'* rather than *'behaviors,'* to use Mauss's terms; that he gives himself artificially a total rationality in terms of which groups and men are reduced to an abstract function instead of basing that function in the concrete relations that people establish among themselves" (p. 1409). Crucial is not the symbolic but the signifying; the immanent intention in action and not a logical order which would underlie and found the concrete appearance.

The potlatch offers the most paradoxical form of exchange relation: in it the individual manifests reciprocity with others and with nature through the *destruction* of the gift offering. For Lefort, "not only is this an act, but the act par excellence, through which man conquers his subjectivity" (p. 1413). Mauss proposed as a first explanation of the reciprocity involved in the potlatch the idea that the destruction of the goods was conceived as a kind of exchange with the gods. The problem with this is that we know that the potlatch phenomenon also serves as a form of competition: whomever destroys the most goods becomes chief, receives recognition, or honors. Mauss makes a second suggestion: in destroying the goods, the giver is in effect putting the other into an obligation which cannot be repaid, thereby establishing a relation of domination. The problem is that if this were the case, it would destory the reciprocity on which the gift relation in general is based. One must go further: the destruction of the goods implies that the

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giver is independent of the goods, independent of external things and of nature. The domination that is established thus appears to be based solely and simply on the persons themselves, not on external signs of power; in Hegelian terms, the confrontation with the other is effected through the mediation of the confrontation with nature. The goal is thus not simply the submission of the other, but of nature itself. In this manner, the establishment of the independent personality is also the establishment of a specific *sociality as distinct from nature.* Lefort writes: "We thus see that our analysis leads us to a more profound reality than that of individual relations: social reality itself. Exchange by gifts appears at first to offer the double character of opposition between men and opposition of men to nature which we discovered in the potlatch. In a first sense, it is the act by which man reveals himself *for* man and *by* man. To give is just as much to put the other person in your dependence as to put yourself in his dependence in accepting the idea that he will return the gift. But that operation, that initiative in giving presupposes a primordial experience in which implicitly each knows himself to be tied to the other; the idea that the gift must be returned presupposes that the other person is an other than myself who *must* act like me; and his activity in return must confirm to me the truth of my own act, that is, my subjectivity. The gift is thus at once the establishment of the difference and the discovery of sameness" (pp. 1414-15). The opposition and difference without which the gift relation could not exist only becomes real when the other returns the gift, hence, in a sense suppressing the opposition. "One does not give in order to receive," writes Lefort in italics, "one gives in order that the other give" (p. 1415). In this manner, "Behind the struggle of men for mutual 'recognition' there appears the movement of a collectivity which attempts to behave like a collective subject. But far from abolishing the plurality of subjects, this 'we' only exists insofar as each affirms his own subjectivity by the gift. The behavior of the empirical subjects cannot be deduced from a transcendental consciousness; such a consciousness, on the contrary, constitutes itself in experience" (p. 1415). The obligation to return the gift is not simply an obligation between two private persons; it is a "social" obligation which, if broken, would threaten the society itself, the human reality which has ripped itself free from nature and constituted itself as a society. The social is more than the sum of individual actions, and less than the self-transparence of a pure subject.

At the conclusion of the essay on the exchange relation, Lefort indicates the direction for further reflection: "These remarks, which see themselves in the prolongation of the analysis of Mauss, should have the advantage of permitting a confrontation of the social and the historical. It is striking that the exchange by gifts in its generalized form, and the institution of the potlatch, predominate and maintain themselves in societies that are incapable of developing a history" (p. 1416). The social relations instituted

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by the potlatch regulate the rivalry between men and others as well as their relations with nature. The society which they constitute still has competition among its members. But the competition remains at a level of immediacy, never threatening the social relations that have been instituted. The question that arises is that of the mediations which are the conditions of the possibility of a history. More generally, what is history itself?

Lefort's "Société sans histoire et Historicité," presents the specificity of the social which we have just established through an analysis of what he calls a problem for "all rationalist theories of human history."[10] Be it the idealism of a Hegel or Husserl, or the materialism of a Marx, the problem of the *origin* of historical society remains opaque. Once the historical course is engaged, the rationalist does fine. But we know that there are societies which never enter into the path of history, or at least don't do so of their own will and logic. The question is analogous to the one just posed: by what human decision, through what bestowal of sense, does history emerge as structuring the interrelations of humans among themselves? Not that we need postulate a "first town meeting," or somesuch; it is not important, and not demonstrable, that such an event existed or could have existed. Important is that individual behavior finds itself determined by a collectively assumed decision which wrenches it from its naturalness and structures its behavior.

Non-historical societies are not free from conflictual behavior: jokes hide hostility, counter-magic is used against the spells of the other, paternal love for the son conflicts with duty to the nephew in matrilineal societies. Yet the society continues, reproduces itself daily. Lefort suggests that "social reality is never totally given in its present; the synchronic order always encloses a discordance between its elements; and the harmonious configuration itself doesn't reveal an essence but presents itself rather as a *solution which has come into being* [*solution advenue*], as an ensemble of concordant replies given to past situations even though the sense of these situations escapes the present people (an encounter with another people, discovery of a new mode of production), and hence one doesn't know in what sense this is a reply" (p. 98). In other words, *the lack of a past is nothing*; "its absence calls it to our attention, suggests a style of becoming which can at least be described" (p. 99). The attempt to deal with the question of social origins, the institution of institutions, has more than an academic or antiquariat payoff.

The particular mode of becoming of non-historical societies suggests the need to reconceptualize the notion of history. "What is specific to an *historical* society appears to us to be that it envelops the event, and has the power to convert it into a moment of an experience, such that it appears as an element in a debate which men pursue among themselves. Thus, in it the

10. "Société sans histoire et Historicité," p. 92. Again, I am citing from an offprint, and have not found the original text. The article was written in 1952. Further citations to this article in the text which follows will be indicated by page numbers within parentheses.

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transformation is not essentially the passing from one state to another, but the progress of an intention which anticipates the future by tying it to the past" (p. 102). History is "a style of collective behavior," giving sense to the world and defining social relations (p. 102). For this reason, historical *memory* becomes crucial: "If a society preoccupies itself with interpreting its past and with situating itself with relation to that past, if it explicitly formulates the principles of its organization, if it relates its factual activity and everything *new that happens* to it (lui *advient*) to its consciousness of its role and its values—this supposes a particular type of becoming" (p. 103). The question then becomes, how can we explain the manner in which non-historical societies *live* a collective past? What is the sense and structure of the *decision* of societies without history? And how can we understand the *representation* of the past or future through which a society becomes conscious of its own identity? (The latter question poses the problem of ideology in its socio-historical specificity, and the question of the Power in society, around which Lefort's recent work has turned, and to which we will return.)

Lefort uses Bateson's analysis of Bali as a "schismogenetic" society, showing how the conflict-ridden Balinese society has established a variety of mechanisms to preserve itself from upheaval. Crucial in this account is that the Bali society depends on a rigid set of orientations in time, space and status. Outside these coordinates, the individual is lost, and quite literally becomes neurotic. This is not to be explained, as Bateson suggests, by psychoanalytical concepts. In such a society there are no neutral situations; all behavior is governed by the social relations that cement together the society and constitute the individual as what he or she is. The past and future too must be brought into the structure of the presence of the present, for otherwise the experience of indetermination would destroy the capacity of the socialized individual to function. Non-historical social relations thus serve as a way of avoiding the outbreak of social conflict, legitimating the forms of domination that give the society its particular character.

What then are the conditions which permit the passage from non-history to history? Lefort's suggestion is that the non-historical societies are structured as if the only goal for the individual is to relate to others, and to constitute themselves with these others as a "we," separate from nature and continually reproducing itself through the network of immediate relations to others. All activity is multi-valued, with economic, moral, religious and aesthetic values coming together, such that none is taken in its own domain, but simply as an expression, open to many interpretations, but never neutral or valueless. "On the other hand, it is when activity becomes *labor* that it fixes its signification, that it acquires objectivity in showing the adequation of an intention and an object, that it turns men from their debate among themselves to draw them into a finality which was not given with their simple co-existence" (p. 113). There is nothing necessary in this development, nothing

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pre-inscribed in the non-historical society that pre-figures the transformation. There is no reason why the previous experience of social division should have its legitimacy and its sense suddenly changed. Nor is the process one of natural, gradual evolution. Where in the stagnant society, production was subordinated to the confrontation and integration of people into the collectivity, "it is by a revolution in historicity that men transform production into productivity, disengage themselves from that investment in the other person which was their primitive situation, and inaugurate a history" (p. 113). The paradox, in other words, is not what it appeared to the rationalist—that there exist non-historical societies—but rather what appears is an *adventure* in human relations which surges forth without necessity, yet of course not without anterior conditions. To look to causal explanation would be to lose the specificity of the social which we have analyzed; the object explained would no longer be the one which concerns us.[11]

For Lefort, history and society are the institutions which emerge from human co-existence, but which are not necessitated by any material or moral preconditions. In a later, unpublished, reflection on this stage of his work, Lefort suggests that we need to ask a further question: "What ethnologist, I ask, has questioned the conditions which give him access to an experience of the world incommensurable with his. Who examines the fact, nonetheless unavoidable: that it is in this time, in this space where we are anchored, that there is the possibility, perhaps one should say necessity, of knowing the meaning of other human societies, whereas within the frontiers of these latter, at least for savage societies, there is not a *view* on the foreign world."[12] *This is not the well-beaten problem of cultural relativism.* Lefort is re-emphasizing the argument about the place of memory and representation in an historical society. This conclusion is reinforced in an article written during this period, "Capitalisme et religion au XVIe siècle,"[13] where the economic determinist views of Robertson are contrasted with the more open interpretation of Tawney. In question is Weber's Protestant ethic thesis; but more importantly, the question of "revolution" emerges as central: "A revolution supposes...a vision of the past and an apprehension of the future as the negation of the past, a heterogeneity of time or of temporality; or further, an *act* whereby men join together in opposing, as *we*, other men whom they dispossess of their sense" (p. 1897). While one can of course point to "capitalist" behavior and institutions as early as the thirteenth century, and while at least the Jesuits attempted to

11. Later, Lefort will identify the emergence of history with that of a power, the political, separated from the society and claiming to incarnate its unity. We will return to this.

12. "Rapport de Recherches," p. 16. This essay was submitted to the CNRS, Lefort's employer, as part of the dossier for his yearly evaluation. It has not been published.

13. "Capitalisme et religion au XVIe Siècle," in *Les Temps Modernes*, 78 (1952). I am again citing from an offprint. The following page numbers within parentheses refer to this article.

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adapt Catholicism to the new conditions, Lefort's point is, on the one hand, that neither the economy nor ideology alone can be said to univocally determine anything; and on the other hand, and more importantly, that the Reformation has a revolutionary signification precisely insofar as, in introducing a new attitude to the world, it marks a rupture with the established mode of representation. The capitalist in the world of universal Catholicism could not affirm capitalism as such; only through the opening of a new signification could the capitalist come to know himself as a self-conscious subject. In other words, once again, the *institution* of a form of *sociality* shows itself as central to Lefort's *political* concerns. This position emerges more sharply in his next major theoretical advance, "L'aliénation comme concept sociologique," in which the particularity of *historical* society is played out. In the attempt to avoid the essentialist vision of alienation as *une condition humaine*, Lefort is led toward the themes which dominate his work today.

Lefort's turn to the concept of alienation was outwardly conditioned by the times. Marxism was becoming accepted, among professors and Catholics; but in a peculiar fashion. Landshut and Mayer, in their Introduction to their edition of the *1844 Manuscripts*, assert for example that Marx's "All history is the history of class struggle" could just as well read: All history is the history of alienation. In this manner, Marx becomes just a more consistent Hegelian, taking the dialectic a step further. Lefort's counter is remarkably penetrating: he summarizes Evans-Pritchard's description of Nuer society—a society which, at first glance, appears nothing but reified, alienated, mystified by one commodity which, though important, is not its life source: cattle. All social relations are expressed in bovine terms: lineage, marriage, exchange, aesthetic and religion. Indeed, the language of the Nuers seems to have a manifold of nuances when it comes to cows, and to be impoverished elsewhere. Nuer life is not solely dominated by cattle; but its world of representation is, down to its metaphors and proper names. A truly fetishistic society, *it seems*. Even the use of cattle is not as "economically rational" as it might be, for the *image* of the cow, its fetish, is crucial, not the full exploitation of one's bovine resources. Wars, quarrels, personal relations are all hidden behind bovine mystifications. Finally, to make the analogy complete, the Nuer dream content seems to indicate a latent hostility to the cow, as do its myths and rites. For the "Marxist" professor, an incipient revolt must be brewing in Nuer society. The problem, however, is that this is a view from outside; from within the society functions harmoniously—as one would expect from Lefort's analysis of Mauss or the problem of non-historical societies. What sense, then, does it make to talk about alienation and its correlates in this context?

On its most general level, Marx's notion of alienation is derived from the difference between a reality and an irreality: the socialized nature of

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productive labor is a reality in capitalism; but the commodity form in which it appears is an irreality, an appearance which hides and deforms the reality. Alienation is this difference. There is no "natural" form of labor which is deformed under capitalism and thus grounds alienation. In insisting on the specificity of the capitalist form, Marx shows that the socialization of labor is not natural, but is an achievement of capitalism; just as the equality among human labors (the notion of abstract, socially necessary labor) did not exist before capitalism. To have recourse to the essentialist or naturalist critique returns alienation to the domain of traditional philosophy. What Marx is doing is, to the contrary, insisting on its sociological and historical specificity. Moreover, Marx always points out that the alienated, fetishized forms are *nonetheless* real, actual conditions. When he criticizes a situation where the movement of things dominates people's activity and self-understanding, Marx always notes that it is not things but people who are acting through the things and creating these conditions of domination. Domination, however, has existed in manifold forms and societies; in all but capitalism it has not had the double structure of alienation in Marx's schema: negativity with positive implications. What is it that specifically permits capitalist social relations, and only them, to be the antechamber to the realized socialist society?

The attempt to specify the notion of alienation also clarifies an ambiguity in Marx's own analysis: is capitalism simply the process defined by the formula M-C-M'? What is its specific mode of sociality? Marx's discussion of the phases of development which emerge from manufacture to what he calls "Machinery and Modern Industry," suggests that where the manufacturing phase subordinated the worker to a total process, this worker still remained an individual, with particular and personal skills, working in specific branches, etc. In the further development, however, the personal skills (and limits) are surpassed; the individual becomes simply a cog, part of the "collective worker" whose work is ever-more decomposed into its component parts. The result is that any possible view of the totality or sense of the work process is lost, one's job becomes a bit-part in a mystery play, *and* the interdependence of each on the others is increased. Modern industry thus presents a janus-face: "It appears, in effect, that the specific movement of industry by which the unity of all the productive acts is established—a universal society—is at the same time the movement by which separate spheres of activity are constituted..."[14] The social and socialized character of production is patent in the activity of work itself; and at the same time, the division of labor into separate spheres, its constant decomposition into partial processes, separates the individual within the productive unity. Where in manufacture, the labor which gave value to the product is that of

14. "L'aliénation comme concept sociologique," p. 50. Again, I am citing from an offprint, and have not got the publication data. The article dates from 1956. Citations shall follow the above pattern.

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individual craftspeople, in modern industry that which gives value is precisely "average socially necessary labor," as Marx puts it. For manufacture, and the social forms which preceded it, this measure was the theorist's reconstruction; in modern industry *it is the structure of reality itself:* the unity of labor is effectively given in the multiple tasks which compose the totality; but each task is only a fragmentary relation to that unity. The technological form of a given productive task gives that production a (historically specific) universality; while the division of capital and labor, mental and manual, makes each activity particular. In this sense, the actual process of assembly line production, for example, incorporates a contradiction: each gesture is at once radically particular (turning this bolt, welding this joint) and effectively universal (as part of the total social process). But the terminology borrowed from the philosopher should not mislead: "The contradiction is not that between universalization and particularization, but rather consists in this, that the experience of the particular criticizes itself because it presents itself as privation of the universal, because the experience of the universal degenerates into the particular" (p. 51). It is not that my work is somehow robbed of its essence, deformed and distorted. Nor is this the *condition humaine*, caught between heaven and earth, good and evil. "From this perspective, one cannot speak of a society alienated in technology, in money or whatever; or of an alienated man, as if it were possible for the being of the society or the man to become Other. Alienation is not a state; it is the process in which activity is cut up into a manifold of independent spheres at the same time that each of these divided activities is subordinated to a single productive schema" (p. 52). The individual is destined at once to have a profession, a concrete form of activity in which he or she objectifies and socializes himself or herself; and at the same time, such stable activity loses its sense and becomes particular, a fragment within a social process continually changing but always riven by the contradiction between the socialization which renders it universal and the particularization of the activities of the individuals.

The implications of this specification of alienation *within the structure of capitalism itself* are both a development and a critique of Marxism. The notion of ideology can now be grounded sociologically. Ideology is defined by Marx as an inversion of the real, but one which is not the fault of consciousness but of the social structure itself. In theoretical terms, ideology is the transformation of the particular into the universal. The necessity of this transformation can be seen in the above description: the fragmentation and atomization of the worker and the act of production in modern industry which has as its defining characteristic the socialization (i.e., universalization) of society. Each particular domain, from the menial to the mental, from production to juridical or artistic activity, *is* effectively particular, and yet within the socialized totality, historically universal. Each

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tends, therefore, to attempt to realize the universal in its activity, to generalize from what it does to what the social totality as a whole *is*. The result, of course, is self-deception; the impossibility of having a total view of the society because each sphere, as particular, is closed in on itself, not in communication from within to without; and yet each does effectively, structurally, communicate in spite of itself. Ideology thus becomes not a form of consciousness *within* a given social formation; *ideology is the structure of capitalism itself!* It is therefore incorrect and misleading to speak of ideology when one is talking, say, about religion, or of the function of philosophy or culture in a pre-capitalist social formation.

At the same time, however, that it makes more precise what Marx was driving at with his notion of alienation, this analysis carries a further implication to which Lefort's work in the 1960s increasingly turned, culminating in his *Machiavel: le travail de l'oeuvre* (1973). The problem of alienation and of ideology, poses the problem of reality and of truth. That which is most real, immediate, appears in fact to be that which is least real. The occultation of reality is built into the structure of capitalist social relations. Marx thought that his analysis uncovered the real or capitalist reality itself; but in fact, by the very structure which it uncovers, Marxism must be seen itself as part of that structure: *thought in alienation thinking alienation; ideology thinking the structure of ideology.* The demand for totality, built into but denied by the social structure, becomes the demand for truth, which is systematically and structurally unattainable. The result is not an irrationalism or existentialism; rather, it calls forth a redefinition of the task of theory. Theory, carried within the social structure and governed by its operation, becomes society's own self-interrogation; philosophy is no longer the unveiling of a truth which was always-there but somehow occulted; it is the continual process of interrogation, destined to ambiguity, prohibited from absolutizing its results. In this way, the kinship between the "philosophy of ambiguity" of Merleau-Ponty and the political development of Lefort, re-emerges. Lefort concludes his essay on alienation: "If the idea of alienation in the last analysis calls forth that of truth, it is on the condition that we find its properly sociological content" (p. 54). This will be the grounds for a double operation: critique of the presuppositions of social and political analysis and action, and at the same time a return to and re-evaluation of philosophy.

In "La politique et la pensée de la politique," a remarkable homage to Merleau-Ponty written shortly after the latter's death, Lefort tries to understand the inability of the Left to deal with the Algerian Revolution and its implications in France. During the Revolution, the French Left united in its support of the FLN; with the victory, the FLN itself showed its divisions, and the Left saw its transferred enthusiasm shattered on the realistic decisions imposed on the Front. In France, the war's end brought not an upsurge in political action and consciousness, but a depression and

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decompression. What bothered Lefort in the attitude of the Left was that "politics increasingly bases itself on a moral perception of the world in terms of which one must choose at each instant between two principles which exclude one another; and since these principles express themselves in men and structures, one must give one's unreserved adhesion to the party of revolution whose very existence is its justification."[15] This is different from traditional Marxism which is based on a rational image of society joining revolutionary consciousness and structural necessity in a capitalism whose decline pointed already to the socialist future, and whose gravedigger is produced from within. The new revolutionary morality replaces Marxism's rational interpretation of history. Typical of this position is, of course, Sartre. The counter-position is that of Merleau-Ponty.

For Merleau-Ponty, the question of revolution and that of reality and truth are inseparable. "In a sense, Marxism taught him what he was looking for, what his work on the body and perception had already opened to reflection: a relation with being which testifies to our participation in being, specifically, a philosophy of history which uncovers our historicity. The proletariat is precisely that singular being where we find the genesis of history, where the past lives on in its sense, where the truth of what is not yet announces itself" (p. 58). Lefort's detailed analysis of Merleau-Ponty's attitude toward Marxism, in *Sense and Nonsense*, then in *Humanism and Terror*, shows how the "singular being" of the proletariat becomes the central axis on which Marxism turns. Attempting to remain within the opening that he found in Marxism, Merleau-Ponty confronts it with its empirical correlates, brings together the theoretical proletariat and its actual incarnation. The opening of Marxism is its rejoining in one subject of the empirical and the true, praxis and theory. Yet this unique opening, the defense of which makes *Humanism and Terror* appear at times like a defense of Stalin's purges, is precisely the grounds for the degeneration which Merleau-Ponty would trace in *The Adventures of the Dialectic* a few years later. If the proletariat is taken as the Truth which coincides with the real, and if its project is defined outside its control, then the empirical proletariat and its activities no longer enter into the dialectical interaction. Correlatively, if today's empirical proletariat is looked at in itself, the truth claim essentially to the revolutionary project can no longer be maintained. If one sticks to the premise, the result is the theory of the Party-as-Truth, as moral absolute, or as revolutionary will, as appears in Lukács, Trotsky and Sartre.

The result of Merleau-Ponty's series of confrontations with Marxism is a reformulation of the dialectic of being and truth, history and historicity. Marx's error is that he attempted to find a *place* in history which would be the incarnation of his theory. He thinks of history in terms of totality, in

15. "La politique et la pensée de la politique," in *Lettres Nouvelles*, 11e année, nouvelle série, no. 32, p. 30. Citation is from an offprint; date of the article is 1961 or 1962; page citations appear within parentheses in the text.

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terms of the principle of the constitution of that totality. This, however, is to fall back into *representational* thought, and thus to deny truth and historicity: "Society cannot become an object of representation, or a matter which we would have to transform, because we are rooted in it; we discover in the particular form of our 'sociality' the sense of our projects and our tasks" (p. 67). The task of political theory is not to explain and express our attachment to a society and a history which determine us. On the contrary: what must be restored is the fundamental indetermination of our historical situation. The path to this restoration is the process of *interrogation* of the real.[16] This implies politically the rejection of the goal "of instituting a regime freed from the exploitation of man by man, which translates into the program of a party which would demand Power" (p. 68). The class struggle still exists; modern capitalism makes resistance all the more necessary. Still, "The idea of a thought committed to indetermination and of a politics committed to contestation, is not foreign to the spirit of Marxism... In the image that Marx has of the proletariat, we can recognize the symbol of a rupture of the social unity, and of a questioning, in the movement of history itself, of the relation of man to being" (p. 69). This aspect of Marx's theory of the proletariat and its praxis has been covered over, not simply by the epigone or by the changing structure of capitalism. Lefort's 1964-65 Sorbonne lecture series, "Réalité sociale et histoire," shows why.

Marx's claim is that the critique of theory in specific social conditions is the critique of reality itself. This can be understood on the basis of the above analysis of capitalist social relations as a process of alienation, necessarily giving rise to the forms of consciousness known as fetishism and ideology. The socialization of society accompanied by the continual and increasing division of labor means that from within the society knowledge of the social totality—the self-knowledge or transparence of the social—is not possible. As the impossible attempt to know society from within, bourgeois theory manifests bourgeois reality in its contradictoriness. But Marx would appear to fall under the same strictures—unless he can claim that his theory is *itself* the praxis of a class of society, a social reality, which is not subject to the distortions of the alienation process. This is why Marx is driven to find anchorage in a *place* that is both within society, a participant undergoing its processes, and which yet escapes the fate of society. This praxis, this place, is of course the proletariat. Lefort explains why Marx can make this claim, looking at the commodity nature of the proletariat, its actual functions in the work process, and its political role. As the commodity labor-power, the proletarian is a formally free contractual partner; which means that in selling his or her labor-power, the proletarian lives the contradiction of

16. Lefort will later call this procedure *interpretation*, in order to indicate that the interrogation follows a logic and method which arise from the imbrication and participation of the subject in the subject-matter. Lefort's most recent work deals at depth with the problem of interpretation, bringing to bear not only phenomenological but also Freudian categories.

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being a commodity and being a proprietor. Moreover, the particular commodity labor-power has no fixed value; its value is determined through the process of the class struggle itself. The proletarian enters the labor process at first as a private individual; but the hours at work are lived as part of a collective, to be followed by a return to the private concerns. This movement from individual to collective and back to individual again takes place not in the sphere of circulation but in a specific kind of production: in modern industry (as opposed to the still artisanal manufacturing process), where the veils are lifted and the worker experiences the material social reproduction. Modern industrial production functions in terms of a double demand: that the worker do what he or she is told; and yet that the worker participate, want to produce, confront the unexpected quickly and creatively. The proletarian thus experiences rationalization but, not tied to one branch or job, and especially not tied to the commands of profit, experiences too the perversions of that rationalization. When the proletarian emerges to a political role, it is not simply a defensive one, but tends towards a struggle for social control. In this expression of its goals, the proletariat does not need to conceal its intentions, whereas the bourgeoisie must continually hide from itself and its supporters the structure of domination which its rule perpetuates.

These structural conditions imply the possibility of true social knowledge for the proletariat. An infinite dialectic is established in which the proletariat, still a part of bourgeois society, continually engaged in its own self-critique. Is this a circular argument? Marx presents a description of the proletarian situation and then claims that the description grounds the truth of the description, its revolutionary implications. Theory is subordinated to praxis—but still from the point of view of theory. One might say that this is precisely the dialectic of theory and praxis which refuses to make the one depend on the other; and the continual self-critique would be there to prove the virtue of this approach. But once the validity of the option for the proletariat is *assumed,* the dilemma of falsification emerges, for the infinite dialectical self-critique supposes an end which can never be reached. One can point to tendencies which seem to confirm the analysis; and to others that deny it. These latter are the problem. Can we reduce them to mere accidents? The development of a workers' aristocracy or the increasing interference of the state, to name but two frequently mentioned problems, can be accounted for by the theory. They are not merely accidental or conjunctural appearances. Their existence, however, does not necessarily invalidate the theory: other tendencies confirming it can be cited. Lefort suggests that to get around this indefiniteness, we need to ask about the theory's premise: "Can thought ever postulate that there is an empirical place where history and society uncover themselves in their totality, where all equivocation is dissipated, where the institutions, collective behaviors and symbols become transparent, where all the significations of the event are

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recuperated in the same truth?"[17] The question goes to the heart of Marxism. One could reply that Marx doesn't treat the proletariat as already universal, fully conscious, free from contradictions; and that he doesn't suppose that society can be fully known but, on the contrary, stresses its contradictory character. Not only this; Marx insists that history need not conduct us to socialism: barbarism is also a possibility. Here, however, the problem reemerges: "How can there be a correct relation with history, an exchange between social theory and social praxis, open investigation and true interrogation, if we have only the choice between the continual affirmation of an absolute sense and the negation of this sense which becomes the negation of all sense" (p. 69). If the task of history is the achievement of socialism; if individual historical events and social configurations are to be interpreted in function of the movement toward this goal; and if those phenomena which stand in the way of this movement are either integrated into the process or ignored in the press towards action; if, in other words, the contradictory reality is taken up only in what it shows as positive, then the dialectic is eliminated, experience cannot do more than modify a presupposed truth, and theory becomes empiricism—the "method of the progressive intellectuals." "The result is thus paradoxical. Pretending to discover within history, at the level of the phenomena, an absolute foundation, the theorist rejoins the position of the philosopher who flies above history and subsumes empirical reality under the idea of a transcendental becoming of truth. But this paradox should not surprise us, for if the two procedures coincide, this is because in both cases thought postulates an adequation of sense and being (of the being of society and the being of history)" (p. 70). One falls back into the myth of possessing the entirety of the phenomenon—precisely what the analysis of the alienated structures of capitalist society warned against. The theory becomes ideological.

Marxism opens the question of the reality and truth of the social; and yet it closes it off hastily. Its error is to equate the signifier and the signified, to become a representational and rationalist thought in the classical sense. Lefort shows in his lectures that Marx doesn't always fall into this error. The analysis of the Asiatic society, for example, or the discussion of the peasantry in the *Eighteenth Brumaire* shows the role of the symbolic in social constitution. Rather than follow Lefort through these analyses, it will be more useful to turn to the article, "Réflexions sociologiques sur Machiavel et Marx: La politique et le réel," where Lefort develops his interwoven political and theoretical argument through a critique of Gramsci's attempt to reconcile Marx and Machiavelli.

17. Citation is from "Réalité sociale et histoire," p. 68. This is the mimeographed version of the student notes, reread and corrected by the professor. They can usually be purchased by students. Lefort is planning to revise these lectures for eventual book publication.

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Gramsci suggests that beyond their obvious differences, Marx and Machiavelli share in a common *political realism* which opens up a new *experience* of the world, a new conception of society and truth. "What constitutes the common originality of their work is that both begin from the certainty that the real is what it is, and that in a certain manner there is nothing to be changed in it; and yet both induce from this a practical task."[18] Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach is not at all the rhetoric of engagement, moral choice or spontaneous activism. It is the assertion that the real is through and through praxis; and that precisely the praxical contradictions of the present point beyond it. Similarly with Machiavelli, we find an anticipation of the philosophy of praxis: "Knowledge of the past teaches what men are; the reading of empirical history is a reading of human nature. Realism consists in acting such that, the present situation being brought back into the terms of a past one, we can either apply the adequate remedies previously conceived, or imagine other ones, since we are aware of the errors that have been committed. In all events, our power of intervention is based on the consistency of human passions and of the struggle which opposes everywhere a privileged class and the people, which is the origin of all the difficulties and all the solutions" (pp. 117-118). Though they were apparently writing for different classes—Marx for a revolutionary proletariat, Machiavelli for the Prince—a moment's reflection shows that in both cases the relation of the work to its public was similar, notes Gramsci. True, the *Prince* was in appearance for the ruler; but the ruler has to justify domination; which means in fact, hide it. Machiavelli's recipes may be correct; but the Prince could never publish them! The implication is that Machiavelli was writing for someone else: the rising, yet still timid, bourgeoisie.

Machiavelli is a political realist insofar as he recognizes the historical task which the new bourgeoisie, blinded by tradition, has not yet understood. "If he draws our attention to the nature of power, reveals that it is a human creation arising from the permanent conditions of social struggle, it is because he is speaking to those who are blinded by the Power, who haven't yet understood that it is within their grasp if only they are the stronger. And he shows the price of its conquest" (p. 120). The *Prince* thus appears to have the same demystifying function as the "philosophy of praxis." There arises the idea of an historical task, which the prince recognizes and must render accessible to the consciousness of the people. In this sense, the Machiavellian Prince easily becomes the "Modern Prince," the Leninist Party. The Prince-Party is the mediator. "In such an interpretation, Marxism permits us to rediscover the sense of Machiavellism; but

18. "Notes sociologiques sur Machiavel et Marx: La politique et le réel," p. 116. Once again I cite from an offprint—but have found the data! *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, vol. 28, nouvelle série, 7e année (January-June, 1960). References in the text follow the usual format.

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Machiavellism rejoins, defines in its place, the Marxist intention" (p. 123). Overthrowing the traditional authorities and mystifications permits the establishment of a new authority, the *task* to which all else is subordinated.

The political implication of this realism is the separation of the class struggle from the daily life of the class. The sphere of politics is circumscribed and separated. "Precisely because of the opacity that it maintains with regard to the masses, it calls for the elaboration of a particular strategy whose objective is to obtain and to maintain their *consensus*, to convince them of the legitimacy of their leaders and the utility of their own sacrifices" (p. 124). Moreover, this position lends assurance to the leaders, gives them the certainty that they are the agents of history, that they are correct in subordinating all to the achievement of their task. The writings of the political realist are taken only in their functional usage, to be judged by the success or failure of their appeal. And since the appeal is to the universal, the particular cannot disprove but only confirm the realist. When this is applied to Marxism there arises a specific problem. While the bourgeoisie exists as an economic class, but needs political representatives insofar as the basis of its economic unity is competition, the proletariat cannot operate through representatives. It is itself only when it struggles, not as represented in a separate political sphere. This means that if the Prince-Party is the truth and universal, then it cannot be criticized, for the foundation in being of this truth is denied, and a truth which cannot relate to its origins is nothing but ideology.

Pursuing the notions of indetermination and interrogation, Lefort suggests that it is precisely this realism which must be put into question; and that a careful look at Machiavelli's originality confirms this approach. "That originality does not consist in certain propositions which would support an essential thesis. It consists in an approach which makes the writer pass from one position to another, which permits him to outline successively this or that thesis and to destroy them as theses; to conserve in this movement certain indications [*repères*], to multiply them, and thanks to them, to circumscribe an order of phenomena whose unity had never been perceived before this" (pp. 126-127). This movement from thesis to thesis, this multi-level unity in difference, is of course similar to Merleau-Ponty's philosophical interrogations. Lefort is not forcing a thesis on Machiavelli. It is the nature of the *reality* in question to only expose itself in this manner: it is an historical reality, not in the sense of a series of circumscribed events in objective space and time, nor as a progress of humanity to knowledge of itself: "In the infinity of the life of peoples history is the repetition of the project which constitutes society: the assembling of men who situate themselves as depending on the same public thing, acquire a collective identity, inscribe their respective positions in a common natural space, their institutions in a common cultural space, and determine themselves as a private community *vis-à-vis* foreign people, find a certain equilibrium in

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their relation of forces (even if they constantly put it into question), and are led by the will of the Master, that of the most powerful or that of the majority among them, to find the means for their security and their development" (p. 129). This is no contradiction, no dissolution of change. Historical reality is a repetition; but the repetition itself is historical, taking place in specific milieux, specific structures and institutions which offer a finite number of choices. Machiavelli's richly illustrated and multi-signifying writings on Rome, for example, show clearly the social divisions out of which equilibrium emerged; show this as threatened by ignorance, rapacity and fear; and insist that the equilibrium is only maintained by the singular combination of the Republic and its imperial ventures. This is but one variant; Machiavelli leads us through arguments from different positions—the people are good, but can be misled; the Republic chooses the best masters, but as theater of civil strife, it can be dominated by one stratum; and so on. There is no one good regime, no positive politics; there is the real-historical, indeterminant and constantly changing.

Lefort's suggestion is that the realism of Machiavelli consists precisely in the denial of any system of fixed representations. The same is true, he argues, of Marx.[19] "If Machiavelli's thought has come down to us, it is because it forces us to embrace simultaneously these diverse perspectives. We make his realism our own when we observe that the conquest of the real is accomplished in the critique of each image at which we would be tempted to stop" (p. 132). What emerges from Lefort's analysis of Machiavelli is the project of defining a *logic of the political.*[20] "Doesn't realism consist precisely in defining the *terms* of a situation, in ordering them in the form of a question?" (p. 131). The question is more fundamental than the explicit problem of classical political philosophy—that of the good life in the city. It is the *political* question which grounds the *social.* That emergence of the social to itself which preoccupied Lefort in his earlier writings emerges as fundamental to a redefinition of the political.

Lefort's logic of the political is not an onto-logic; it is historical and social. The political as such is constituted along with and inseparable from the social as such. The latter, we say in the discussion of the gift relation, is a wrenching free of interpersonal and communitarian relations from their natural insertion. With this institution of the social, the political surges forth necessarily. It may, however, be lived in a mode of non-recognition,

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19. In "La naissance de l'idéologie et l'humanisme, Introduction" (*Textures*, Vol. 73, nos. 6-7, pp. 27-68), Lefort points out that Marx and his followers tended to neglect this fundamental insight in arguing about ideology which they took as a masking of the real. Such an argument supposes that we know the real, i.e., in this case that the real basis of Roman society was its productive system, for example. We will return to this point in a moment.

20. The term is taken from the title of a review-article of Lefort's *Machiavel*, by Marcel Gauchet (in *Critique*, no. 329 [October, 1974]). The suggestion of such a logic, however, is already contained in the article we are discussing.

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through a concerted effort to avoid the decisions and divisions that it consecrates. The "society without history" appears as a society without the political. Indeed, as Pierre Clastre's ethnographical analyses show brilliantly,[21] though we can look back and see division within primitive societies, there is a tendency in them toward an organizational principle based on the denial of that division: denial either that it is a difference that makes a difference (i.e., justification from a transcendent, external source), or denial of a separation of the spheres of life (the economic, political, religious, etc., remaining immediately interwoven). The political cannot be separated from the social. But it does not, for that reason, exist in the same manner, on the same level, as determined by or determining the social. It is not as if one could say that these phenomena are political, those are cultural, those others economic, and so on. The political is co-institutional with the social. It is a society's self-reflection, the image that it gives itself of itself in the attempt to conjure away and defuse the problem of social division. The political is representational, symbolic; but as such it cannot exist separate from or independent of the social that it represents or brings to awareness—any more than the latter can do without it. Were it to be separated, it would lose its grounds, its origins, and become ideological. Lefort suggests that "It is from that general division, where the power takes form, that it is necessary to begin in deciphering the political and knowing how a power is effectively circumscribed, how it is represented, how it represents itself to others—how the collective representation invests it in the social body and what simultaneously happens to the determination of nature and the gods; how it separates itself, is perceived as *Other*, at a distance and 'above' society; how the position of the separated power is modified and, to examine all the consequences which come into being in the forms of representation and the effectiveness of socialization."[22] This is the general task which the political in any society—even when it is not articulated self-consciously as the political *different* from other social spheres—must fulfill. A logic of the political can thus be established. It will be the logic of a unity in difference whose differentiations are not *aufgehoben* but remain open to the contingencies of historical creation. The system is unstable, riven by conflict; change is always possible, never necessary.

The sense of Lefort's approach can be seen when we think of the advent of democracy in Greece. We don't know why it occurred, can't explain its necessity in socio-historical laws. Yet with democracy came new forms of sociality: the space and time of life within the city took on a different sense, the relation to nature and other humans was modified, and discourse took on a new meaning and indicated a new relation among the speaking subjects. Simultaneously, the political and the image of power changed:

21. Cf., for example, his collection *La société contre l'état*, (Editions de Minuit, 1974).
22. "Rapport de Recherches," *op.cit.*, p. 12.

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politics and power moved into the center of the city. Lefort sees this as a society attempting to carry within itself the law of its own origin, its own institution, breaking with the transcendent justification heretofore typical. Groups and their articulations are to be in constant communication; their interrelations are to be openly readable in the social space. In a word, the society seeks its self-transparence. This, says Lefort, is "An attempt which culminates or roots itself in the idea of a power which is *de jure* non-occupiable, non-appropriable, at an equal distance from all those who are bound to it; no one's power, *neutral*, and as such, *instituting* the social; at once the instigator and guarantor of the Law under which each finds his name, his place, his limit" (p. 2). One sees what Lefort has in mind in the *Republic*. Politics does not become a separate sphere of discourse; it is interwoven throughout the society and the socialization of the citizens. Not that politics is the whole which gives sense to the parts: that would be metaphysics, yielding to representational thought and occluding the question of origins. Rather, "It is that the interrogation of the political is born in a society where, by the effect of an identical historical rupture, both power and knowledge are put into question. Power is questioned in the relation it maintains with the social division in all its forms; and at the same time the knowledge carried in the multiplicity of social discourse—and beyond them, the knowledge of the benchmarks [*repères*] of the real and of the law—is opened to question" (pp. 2-3). The linkage of the political and knowledge occurs through the medium of the discourse which carries both, in which they represent themselves and are instituted in and institute the process of socialization. Here, as we shall see, Lefort's analysis of the political and that of ideology will show a similar structure. The logic of the political is not only referred to the social, but to the discourse of knowledge; the questions of reality and truth that so much govern Lefort's work are linked in the political.

Lefort spells out his logics of the political in a long article, "Sur la démocratie: le politique et l'institution du social," written with Marcel Gauchet, and in his book, *Machiavel: le travail de l'oeuvre*.[23] We can give the flavor of the approach by taking as an example the dilemma of the Prince—democratic, tyrannical, self-proclaimed socialist, or whatever variant thereof. The Prince is to incarnate the unity of society; as such, he is the law. As incarnation, however, the Prince has no proper function; the political has no independent existence. Then, however, the society itself has no delimitation; it cannot properly be called a society since without reference to an Other or Outside different than the collective, socialization cannot take place, group consciousness and historical memory are not possible.[24] The law must be greater than and different from the individuals

23. In *Textures*, vol. 71, nos. 2-3, pp. 7-79. And, *Machiavel: Le travail de l'oeuvre* (Gallimard: Paris, 1973).

24. Cf. the above critique of Sartre for reducing the class to an individual consciousness.

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in order that these latter be able to find themselves in it. As a result, the Prince must assert the separation of the political and the independence of the law. This, however, poses legitimation problems. Either the Prince must attempt to rejoin society—but this defeats his purpose—or he must impose the law upon the citizens. That, however, would risk revolt. The dilemma of the Prince is to be at once the incarnation of the social yet distant and distinct from it. The dilemma is not only that of the Prince's subjective position; it is society's problem, for it rips itself free and constitutes itself only in the move to its political self-representation. Navigating between these two poles, a variety of mediations can be established—corporations, legislators, courts, local governments, etc.;—ultimately, the dilemma remains to be confronted at every step. The courts are to be the law, yet must be open to the new; legislators are to be representatives and yet to find the law for all; pressure groups and political parties have to act from within society in their specific positions, yet in the name of the entire society. What emerges here in this dual claim to be within and yet without, particular and universal, is of course the phenomenon of ideology. At the same time, the domain of political discourse is opened to precisely those questions of interrogatory philosophy: reality and truth.

The interdependence and interrelation of the phenomena of ideology and of the political goes beneath that of structural analogy: both are implicated in the self-assertion and self-maintenance of the social and its discursive character. Commenting on his use of the term 'political,' which may appear either too vague or broad, Lefort writes: "If we nonetheless call political the 'form' in which the symbolic dimension of the social uncovers itself, this is not to privilege the relations of power among all other relations, but to make it clear that the power is not 'something' empirically determined but is inseparable from its representation, and that the test that we have of it is simultaneously a test of knowledge and of the mode of articulation of the social discourse, and is constitutive of the social identity."[25] Perhaps the most striking illustration of this thesis is, in our context, Marx's discussion of Asiatic Despotism—whose very name indicates that this "mode of production" is articulated in terms of something other than the productive base itself. What struck Marx in the Asiatic society is its permanence throughout all types of change, preserved by the absolute separation of the Power from the rural community. This absolutely separate Power, neither founded by nor intervening in the social, gives it its transcendent legitimation, defusing the potential arising from the division inherent in the society. The efficacy of this Power is what Lefort calls *l'imaginaire*—"the imaginary" does not carry the same substantive sense as the French. The *imaginaire*, symbolically articulated, structures the scientific, religious and

25. "Esquisse d'une genèse de l'idéologie dans les sociétés modernes," in *Textures*, vol. 74, nos. 8-9, pp. 3-54. A slightly revised version of this article appears in the *Encyclopédie Universalis* under the title "Lère de l'idéologie."

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aesthetic discourse through which a society comes to know itself. Its function is to neutralize the conflictual *origins* of the social, to create the illusion of permanence and necessity which characterized the "society without history." This task must ever begin anew, and engender the logic of the political; to imagine that the political or ideological could succeed in conjuring the menace is to believe in a society without origins, a thought without its situatedness, a self-transparence of the real.

The interdependence of the political and the ideological is articulated through the discourse on, and knowledge of, the social. To be, the political must articulate itself, enunciate the law. In so doing, however, the logic of its own situation leads it to neglect its origins in the social. Crucial, at this point, is that the division of the social only takes on reality in precisely this articulation in this discourse. Here, the error of Marx manifests itself, conflating the discourse *on* the real (or social) with the discourse emerging from the real itself. Even though he gives the mode of production the broadest possible interpretation, encompassing not only material production but social reproduction including the spheres of language, consciousness and community, Marx deploys this social self-production in the naturalist space of a linearly progressing humanity. As to the question of origins, he turns back to empirical data, ultimately to the division of "labor" in the sexual act. "Here," writes Lefort, "Marx's positivism is unequivocally unveiled." [26] Better: Marx's naturalism. In effect, the suggestion is that from some fact—without entering into the question of how that "fact" constitutes itself, comes to signify for us—there emerges a sense or meaning. There is no bridge between a supposed natural or primitive state and the sphere of meaning or sense which is attached to it. It is precisely this bridge which Lefort's logic of the political as the institution of the social intends to lay bare. Not that he pretends to give an explanation of how and why it occurred; the point is that already here, in a limit condition, we have an illustration of the interaction of the symbolic and the real, the social and the political. This is but one of an infinite manifold of cases; it points our way toward the continual interrogation of the articulation of the real which, we say, constituted a "realist politics."

Lefort's discussion of contemporary ideologies follows this path. He suggests that we have to follow the move of Marx's own *discovery* of ideology, not that of contemporary "critiques" of it. The latter criticize a specific discourse as "ideological" because it veils the real. This supposes, however, that we know what the "real" in fact is. That is precisely what Lefort's work puts into question. Marx himself took a different path from his followers: "From the 'Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State' to *Capital*, one principle of interpretation is maintained, which invites us to discover in the social structure the process of representation, first of all

26. "L'ère de l'idéologie," *op.cit.*, p. 78.

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circumscribed in the limits of the philosophical, religious or political discourse. And it does not seem exaggerated to say that if Marx became disinterested in Hegel, it was because the identification of the real and the rational which he had criticized showed itself to him in the capitalist system as such, in the structuring of the form [*mise en forme*] of the relations of production where the logic of operations exhibits itself thanks to the obliteration of the conditions of their appearance. But such is the virtue of the deplacement effectuated in *Capital* that ideology shows itself there not only rooted in but pre-formed by the mode of production; that capitalism shows itself to be, in a sense, the original ideological discourse—a discourse, it will be recalled, that the author designates explicitly as such several times by making the protagonists speak."[27] We have already discussed Lefort's argument that ideology and alienation are the very structure of capitalism. Here we need to look briefly at his analysis of bourgeois ideology, totalitarian ideology and what he calls the "invisible ideology." It must be stressed that these ideologies are not the conscious representations of individual actors; they are the structures of the social reality itself expressed in the *imaginaire* of the given social and historical conditions.

Ideology is articulated in the attempt to recreate the society without history. The neglect of origins, the denial of the division, and the pretense of rendering the social space self-transparent are its characteristics. Bourgeois ideology is specified by its continual reference to ideals (humanity, justice, democracy, progress, etc.), its belief in rules guiding action, and the multiplicity of accepted discourse. Common to these is that the distinction between the ideal and the real, the rule and its application, the power and the social, appears fully. It is admitted that the ideals are not (yet) realized; the rule is assumed, yet believed only when its effects manifest themselves; and the multiplicity of discourses bears witness to the ongoing attempt to bring together the poles. A "logic" similar to that of the political manifests itself: in articulating itself, the social pretends to self-transparency, yet its articulation separates itself from it; and as separate it is open to question, challenge, revision; and a new articulation or discourse emerges. Bourgeois ideology is vulnerable for this reason; yet from within its own logic, any challenge simply becomes grist for its mill, is caught up in its structure.

The traditional Marxist critique of bourgeois ideology is certainly correct in pointing to its mystifying nature; but what the Marxist cannot explain is why the overthrow of bourgeois ideology took the form of totalitarianism. Lefort's "meta-sociological" suggestion is that the bourgeois logic of indefinite repetition is "haunted by tautology."[28] What totalitarianism tries to achieve is the "reconciliation" of the poles; the separation typical of

27. "La naissance...," *op.cit.*, p. 48.
28. "Esquisse...," *op.cit.*, p. 31.

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bourgeois ideology is eliminated in a new sociality with no barriers between the spheres of life. Totalitarian ideology attempts to incarnate a mastery of the social reality within the society itself; it is a politics which denies its separateness from civil society. It does not speak of the real, but attempts to incarnate itself in it, particularly through the vehicle of the mass party. With it is born a "new social agent," the militant, who in his or her particularity pretends to incarnate the universal. The militant is both in the social and of it, yet is said to know its reality and its immanent goals. The question of subjectivity is covered over, as is the problem of interpersonal relations. A new functionality becomes operational; precisely the artificial nature of the party becomes a virtue, representing a smooth logic of operations claiming to function in terms of the image of the totality. The functionalism of totalitarianism closes the society in on itself; there is no external source of identity, legitimation or socialization. That this is a change in the nature of the social itself explains how totalitarianism differs from previous despotisms. It also explains its instability, and the concomitant function of the terror, which is not accidental. The goal of the totalitarian is to abolish the difference between the political and the social, the ideal and the real, signifier and signified. At the same time, it must *show* what it has done, identify itself as absolute power. Where the bourgeois ideology spoke of the social, yet did not claim to be absolute, the totalitarian has no distance; hence if the organization goes awry, the plan fails or the bureaucrat abuses power, the whole edifice is put into question. Terror is necessary not only for this reason; more essential is that it renders each individual contingent and particular, alike in that the terror may strike anyone—with the result that the desired fusion and elimination of the division within the social is effected. The edifice is fragile, yet viable. It need not fall on its own. Its grotesque forms—in Nazi Germany or in Russia, for example—suggest that perhaps another means for conjuring the division which marked bourgeois ideology is possible.

The happy-go-lucky complement to totalitarian ideology is what Lefort refers to as "the invisible ideology." Reacting to both bourgeois and totalitarian ideologies, the attempt again is to close over the distance of the representation and the real which threatened bourgeois ideology, but at the same time it renounces the completion of the representation within the real through its totalization, which is the task of totalitarianism. Typical of the invisible ideology is the role of the group, which is both an expression of, and the goal of, social communication. What is communicated is not important; important is bringing all together in a homogeneous here and now such that the impression of a mastery over the social is felt by each. Personal presence is stressed, even though the person and the message are dissolved in the ritual of communication itself. Nothing is taboo: "In no epoch has one talked so much. . ." (p. 45). There are no masters, no rules or ideals, and no image of the historical totality; there is just the information

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which is lived as being the social itself which we all share. The result is to cloak the social divisions. Not that one can't talk of class, social contradictions and the like; this too enters into the mill and becomes part of the socialization process. All is communicable, sayable, intelligible; nothing is sacred, but everything is equal, equally real. Science too changes: no longer acting on the real or a theory of it, science is the real itself. Organization is not acting on the real but obeying it. There are no longer bosses and workers, workers and machines; all are part of a functioning whole organized by rationality independent of desire and human choice. Science spreads further insofar as all is to be equally intelligible; nature, psyche, and society are united through the artificialism of method, be it formalism, operationalism, or systems theory. A further part of this machinery is the modern ("structuralist" in the broadest sense) attempt to eliminate the subject in favor of the text. Pedagogy plays its role, too, with its measurement techniques and ultimately the notion of self-evaluation which eliminates the role of the master such that knowledge is not related to the truth or the law but only back onto the supposed real itself. This real is transmitted through information, which all must possess on every conceivable subject in order to join the others in the group. Yet, this knowledge is not a closed system; everything can and must be said, for there is to be perpetual novelty in a present which never becomes a lived past nor opens onto a future. The description could go on, through the ideology of consumption, the transformation of nature into environment, the role of psychology, and still onward. What is at issue is (a) the attempt to destroy or deny the historical dimension of society through the "novelty" of a perpetual present; (b) closing off the question of the origins of the social by instantaneously and continually recreating the group personality; (c) denying the division which institutes the social, and creating the illusion that through the plethora of information and communication the social itself is speaking; (d) homogenizing the real such that it no longer poses a threat through its difference; and (e) socializing the individual in such a manner as to limit the possible expressions of desire to a sphere defined in advance as the real.

The "logic of the political" which governs Lefort's analysis of ideology is articulated in a terminology at once more rigorous and more difficult than that presented here. The basic principles of the analysis emerge as early as the essays discussed initially, and attain greater clarity from this retrospective. Reconsidering his work, Lefort talks about "a new approach to what I have called the institution of the social:" "the discovery that the *form* is tied to a structuring of the form [*mise en forme*], and the latter to a structuring of the sense [*mise en sens*]—a term which I borrow from Piera Aulagnier[29]—and that both (the same movement divided in two)

29. In this introductory context, it may be worth noting that Piera Aulagnier, a psychoanalyst who recently led a split from the Lacanian group, and who edits the journal *Topiques*, is also the wife of Cornelius Castoriadis.

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presuppose a putting into question [*mise en jeu*] of the social identity in a general division such that all particular divisions are inscribed in the same register of the Law and the Real (a register which shows itself to be the same where what is forbidden and the nonsensical coincide: that which cannot be)."[30] The double register of the law and the real which is the social as instituted cannot be brought together any more than it can be ignored. It defines the fundamental and constituent indetermination of the social to a subject or discourse from within it. This is not to be descried, but its implications must be understood. It poses the question of theory as *interpretation.*

At this point, one could begin anew the analysis of Lefort's recent work in the light of its *theoretical* structures and implications; or one might ask what has become of the *political* goals which accompanied Lefort along his way. In the first case, the theory of the *oeuvre* would have to be analyzed through his monumental *Machiavel.* In addition, one would have to reconsider the work of the late Merleau-Ponty, and this particularly in the light of Lefort's rereading of Freud in the 1960, and the influence of the Lacanian interpretation.[31] In the present context, that is impossible. A reflection on Lefort's politics will, however, serve in its stead.

Concluding a long review of Lefort's *Machiavel,* Marcel Gauchet writes that "he restores for us the possibility of thinking about society in a manner which is *philosophy* and knows that it can *only* be philosophy."[32] From the time that he broke with the IVth International, Lefort had rejected the theory of the party as leader of the proletarian revolution in any way, shape or form. He split twice with "Socialisme ou Barbarie" on this issue, and has analyzed it extensively, most recently in *La Brèche.*[33] It will be recalled that Lefort's insistence that the proletariat alone can make its own revolution through its own experience earned him epithets from Sartre for being a "pure consciousness" above the fray. While he has abandoned the theory of the proletariat in its classical form, Lefort's attitude towards social change has remained constant. A theory of the social which knows that it can *only* be philosophy is all that the intellectual—or anyone else, for that matter—can claim. To think that you're doing more is not only self-deluding but dangerous. At best, such a theory which ignores its own limits can be an honestly bourgeois ideological stance; at worst, ignoring its own origins and

30. "Rapport de Recherches," *op.cit.,* p. 12.

31. Lefort is preparing a long study of "La naissance de la psychoanalyse." In addition, in pursuing this line, Lefort's student and collaborator, Marcel Gauchet, has recently published a remarkable study of the second of the *Three Essays on Sexuality,* in *Textures,* vol. 72, nos. 4-5, pp. 115-156, and vol. 73, nos. 6-7, pp. 69-112.

32. Gauchet, in *Critique, op.cit.,* p. 926.

33. Consisting of essays by Lefort, Castoriadis (under the pen-name of Marc Coudray) and Edgar Morin, this was the first study of May '68 to appear—still in May! It is worth consulting to get a feeling not only of May, but of how theorists of this sort reacted in a concrete political situation. In addition to writing, Lefort was very active in Caen, where he was teaching at the time.

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claiming knowledge of the totality, it falls over to the totalitarian side. But this does not imply an "existentialism" of some vague sort: that would be to enter "the invisible ideology."

In his essay on Merleau-Ponty, "La politique et la pensée de la politique," Lefort had stressed that the result of a Merleau-Pontian reflection would be to support the proletarian goals insofar as "we can recognize the symbol of a rupture of the social unity, and of a questioning, in the movement of history itself, of the relation of man to being."[34] Not only does the proletariat constitute that rupture. Within the context of totalitarian and-or invisible ideologies, the rupture is open and inevitable, though inarticulate and unaware of its own nature. The task, however, is not to play the Modern Prince. One participates from one's own place; one analyzes, writes, talks. No more can be done. This is not the pure spirit watching the contradictory particulars fight it out, though it certainly isn't Lenin in the library reading Hegel. It is the place of lucidity guided by theory; the place of theory and the place which the individual cannot but occupy within a social written in the double register. To want to be the leader, or to think of oneself as the militant, is to be open to contradiction in one's own attitudes and from the social reality itself.

This doesn't mean that there won't be social change, that all horizons are blocked. Quite the contrary. But social change doesn't follow a linear logic any more than it follows mechanical laws. It surges forth. We can explain why it could emerge, see and even aid it to self-consciousness. We can recognize that not everything that calls itself revolutionary activity is in fact revolutionary—from the Communists to those modern-day ideologues whose effacement of the individual, ideology of desire or practice of spontaneity is structured by the modern *imaginaire* of the invisible ideology. That is all we can do. But it is certainly not nothing.

34. "La politique et la pensée de la politique," *op.cit.*, pl 69.

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What Is Bureaucracy?[1]

by Claude Lefort

Although the concept of bureaucracy has fallen into the common domain of political sociology, theory of history, and public opinion, and has been sanctified to the success it has today, it has nevertheless remained so imprecise that it is still meaningful to question the identity of the phenomena it claims to describe. At first one is astonished at the diversity or ambiguity of the responses. But this is only a first impression. Bureaucracy appears as a phenomenon that everyone talks about, feels and experiences, but which resists conceptualization. Thus, rather than immediately attempting to provide a new definition or description, we will measure the difficulties encountered by theory, assume that they have a meaning, and from the very beginning critically examine what both motivates and perpetuates these difficulties.

Outline of the Problem of Bureaucracy

Already in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Marx draws attention to the specific nature of the social stratum in charge of the administration of public affairs. To corporations dedicated to particular activities and attached to particular interests, this stratum appears to represent a universal interest. We will follow the development of the theory of the state in Marx's later works, then in Lenin's *State and Revolution*, and its application to post-revolutionary Russian society by Trotsky, together with an examination of the role that the bureaucracy plays as a stratum inextricably bound to the structure of a class society. From this viewpoint, the bureaucracy is neither a class nor a stratum. It is a result of the division of society into classes and class struggles, since its function is to secure the acceptance of the rules of an order (an order undoubtedly connected with relations of production, but in need of being formulated in universal terms and maintained by force). Bureaucracy is "normally" at the service of a dominant class since the administration of public affairs within the framework of a given regime always assumes the preservation of its status. But since it is not simply a section of this class, when the balance of social forces permits it, it can run counter to some of its interests, thus acquiring a relative autonomy. The limits of power are always determined by the configuration of social relations. In short, bureaucracy is a *special* body in society because its function is such that it supports the established structure and its disappearance would mean the end of bourgeois domination. (Marx said that

1. This article originally appeared in *Arguments*, no. 17 (1960); reprinted in *Eléments d'une Critique de la Bureaucratie* (Paris: Droz, 1971). The "Postscript" was written in 1970. English translation by Jean L. Cohen.

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the Commune's first revolutionary measure was the suppression of the bureaucracy through the lowering of functionaries' salaries to that of the average worker.) Since it is not a key to social stratification, its role *in the society is ascribed* by the real historical agents—classes in struggle.

The viewpoint changes as soon as one observes the growth of the stratum devoted to administrative tasks in the various sectors of civil society. Thus, it is tempting to look for criteria defining a type of social organization that recognizes the similarities between the bureaucracies of the state, industry, party, unions, etc. Comparison encourages research into the conditions for the emergence of bureaucracies in order to define a type which would pull together various characteristics.

From this viewpoint, very close to Weber's thesis, the bureaucracy appears again as one particular mode of organization corresponding to a more or less extended sector *within* society. In other words, the social dynamic doesn't seem to be affected by the development of bureaucracies. The mode of production, class relations and political regimes can be studied without reference to a phenomenon designating only a certain type of organization.

A qualitative change in the theory of bureaucracy takes place when it is used to refer to a new class considered to be the dominant class in one or several countries, or even seen as destined to displace the bourgeoisie all over the world. This is suggested by the evolution of the Russian regime after the rise of Stalin, with the disappearance of the old proprietors and the liquidation of the organs of workers' power along with a considerable extension of the Communist Party bureaucracy and the state, which took over the direct administration of society. Similarly, social transformations connected with the development of monopolistic concentration in large industrial societies (notably in the United States) also generate reflection on the development of a bureaucratic class. This necessitates a change in the theory since, because of its role in economic and cultural life, the bureaucracy is now understood as a stratum able to displace the traditional representatives of the bourgeoisie, thus monopolizing power.

Finally, we believe that a completely different conceptualization is required if the phenomenon of *bureaucratization* is seen as a progressive erosion of the old distinctions linked to private property. Bureaucratization here refers to a process seeking to impose a homogeneous social form on all levels of work—at the managerial as well as the executive level—such that the general stability of employment, hierarchy of salaries and functions promotion rules, division of responsibilities and structure of authority, result in the creation of a single highly differentiated ladder of socio-economic statuses. This last thesis refers to a social dynamic in bureaucracy, and lends it a goal of its own, the realization of which engenders an upheaval of all of society's traditional structures. If this is what the problem of bureaucracy boils down to, it is important to examine each of these theses and explore their contradictions.

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The Marxist Critique of State Bureaucracy

As in Hegel, the Marxist account of bureaucracy is conditioned by a theory of history. In fact, when Marx criticizes Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, his own theory is still in gestation. Yet, the philosophical viewpoint still takes absolute precedence, and it is remarkable that Marx could sketch out a description of bureaucracy.

According to Marx, Hegel's error consists in having accepted the bureaucracy's self-image. It claims to embody the general interest, and Hegel decides that it does so. Marx argues that the general interest is actually reduced to the bureaucracy's interest which requires the permanence of particular spheres, i.e., the corporations and the estates, in order to appear as an imaginary universal. The bureaucracy assigns its own goals to the state. It maintains the social division in order to confirm and justify its own status as a particular and privileged body in society. As real activities take place in civil society, the bureaucracy is itself condemned to formalism since it is completely occupied with preserving the frameworks in which its activities are carried out and in legitimating them. This critique reveals a series of empirical traits of bureaucracy whose relevance remains concealed to those who cling to appearances. First, it is the reign of incompetence. Marx writes: "The highest point entrusts the understanding of particulars to the lower echelons, whereas these, on the other hand, credit the highest with an understanding in regard to the universal; and thus they deceive one another." But this incompetence is rooted in the system: "The bureaucracy is a circle from which no one can escape." Finally it lives for the *secret*: the hierarchy guards the mysteries of the state and acts as a closed corporation with respect to the outside world. Furthermore, it engenders a cult of authority which is "the principle of its knowledge and being," while "the deification of authority is its mentality." Finally, it is exposed to a "crass materialism." The bureaucrat makes the goal of the state his own private goal: "a pursuit of higher positions, the building of a career." Marx also shows that this materialism is accompanied by a similarly crass spiritualism: the bureaucracy *wants to do all*, and, in the absence of a real function, it is condemned to an unrelenting activity of self-justification.[2]

Marx's analysis applies to nineteenth century Germany, i.e., to a backward society. Its relevance, however, is not thereby diminished. When he elaborated his theory of the state as an instrument at the service of the dominant class, through the study of a nation where bourgeois development had erased particularism and destroyed the corporations (the France of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte), Marx kept the idea already developed against Hegel: that the state bureaucracy is essentially a parasitic body. Thus, in dealing with Bonaparte's regime, he writes: "This executive power, with its

2. Karl Marx, *The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 47.

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enormous bureaucratic and military organization, with its ingenious state machinery, embracing wide strata, *with a host of officials numbering half a million* besides an army of another half million, *this appalling parasitic body*, which enmeshes the body of French society like a net and chokes all its pores, sprang up in the days of the absolute monarchy, with the decay of the feudal system, which it helped to hasten."[3] In Marx's eyes, the Paris Commune's most revolutionary measure was to have installed cheap government and to have suppressed the privileges and hierarchy characteristic of state bureaucracy. In *State and Revolution*, Lenin only reiterates what Marx had said on these points. The bureaucracy and the standing army considered as two typical institutions of the state are seen as "parasites engendered by the internal contradiction which tears this society apart, but parasites which block its vital pores." To be sure, he clarifies this notion of parasitism, and points out that the recruitment of the bureaucracy from the middle and lower strata detaches part of their members from the rest of the people and allies them to the dominant class. Furthermore, the state bureaucracy is the "stake" in a permanent battle between the large parties fighting over the administrative domains. Particularly during a change of regime, these parties tend to appropriate a substantial part of the booty for their clients.

What is the relevance of the Marxist analysis and what difficulties does it encounter? In the first place, taken as an empirical phenomenon, it presents the state bureaucracy in a light which continues to clarify it today as it did a century ago. It is a critique that resembles common opinion but gives it its reasons. It is still the case that bureaucracy is a circle out of which no one can escape, that subordinates rely on their superiors to take the initiative and to resolve difficulties, while the superiors expect their subordinates to solve particular problems which elude the level of generality where they have been conceived. This solidarity in incompetence goes quite far in tying the employee, situated on the bottom of the ladder, to the system of which he is a part. As a result, it is impossible for him to denounce this system without simultaneously denouncing the vanity of his own function, from which he derives his own material existence. Similarly, bureaucrats seek the highest positions and work itself is subordinated to the gaining or maintenance of personal status, such that the bureaucracy appears as an immense network of personal relations. Actually, relations of dependence displace the objective relations outlined by the division of labor, while internal struggles are superimposed on the formal hierarchy and constantly tend to remodel it according to their exigencies. Today, more than ever, the distribution of the most important positions between the large parties appears as a division of booty whenever there is a change in regime. These observations are worth

3. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (International Publishers, 1969), p. 121. Emphasis added.

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stressing. Such traits are well-known, but what is not explained is why they are not investigated: Marx, and Lenin after him, gave an account. Even if they were wrong, that should not be an excuse for not considering it. But in recognizing its relevance, it is not sufficient to stop at a superficial account of bureaucracy which retains only its official image. In this regard, Marxism preserves a freshness of approach which fares well when contrasted with the vision of certain contemporary sociologists. As already indicated, Marx only sketched out a description which was subsequently smothered by a theory. From this comes the treatment of state bureaucracy as a general category without any attempt to explain its functioning. If the bureaucracy includes all of its members, it still remains stratified (it is, in its essence, stratification) and all of its members do not participate in it in the same way. What is the location of the bureaucrat's power? Why does the bureaucracy always grow in size? Does the very life of the bureaucratic organism include a principle of proliferation? Clearly, state bureaucracies are usually staffed by middle-class elements. By becoming bureaucrats, do they remain part of their class? Do they change their mentality? Do they become sensitive to new interests? Marxism does not answer these questions: its conception of society as completely regulated by the class struggle does not encourage a study of bureaucracy for its own sake.

Today the state is the largest capitalist and the largest investor. In addition to what it administers directly through fiscal and economic policy, it tends to direct investments on a national scale. Although the state is a battlefield between large political parties which include representatives of private capital, and its policies are often the result of countervailing social forces, the struggle between these groups is not the same as that which unfolds in civil society. When joined to the requirements of public administration, the division of interests creates a space for its own decision-making —a space which grows and develops as the process whereby the state increasingly drains larger amounts of capital and takes over an increasing number of tasks previously left to private initiative. The defense of the established order which guarantees the position of the rulers over those who are ruled, creates and recreates everyday the foundations of this sovereignty. In this perspective, the previous conception of state bureaucracy cannot be held any longer. In particular, the concept of parasitism seems inadequate, or at least inaccurate: why does the bureaucratic mode of organization as such multiply parasites? The thesis that, on the whole, bureaucracy is a parasitic phenomenon threads its way into Marxist theory. Actually, the bureaucracy is *necessary* in the context of capitalist society. In order to be effective, the critique must be located at the same level as that of capitalistic organization. If this is the case, does it not seem as if there is a dialectic of domination in modern society whereby a social stratum meant to plan and improve conditions of domination grows in proportion as industrial work invades all sectors of social life, and that the life of the masses must be

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subordinated to it? When all is said and done, does this process of bureaucratization, so visible in the framework of the state, also obtain within what the young Marx called civil society?

The Bureaucracy as a Type of Organization

Let us provisionally skip these questions in order to deal with another perspective which uncovers the multiplicity of bureaucracies in modern society and draws attention to their common function and similarity. Here Max Weber is the starting point. He lists certain traits he considers typical of modern bureaucracies: (1) The duties of functionaries are officially fixed by laws, rules, or administrative dispositions; (2) The functions are hierarchical and integrated into a system of command such that at all levels lower authorities are controlled by higher authorities; (3) Administrative activity is spelled out in written documents; (4) These functions require a professional apprenticeship; (5) The work of functionaries demands complete devotion to the office; (6) Access to the profession is at the same time access to a particular technology, jurisprudence, commercial science, administrative science, etc.

From this analysis some conclusions can be drawn concerning the bureaucrat. His office appears to him as the exercise of a profession to which a determinate ensemble of knowledge is attached. Moreover, it is neither *de facto* nor *de jure* the source of fees any more than it is the object of a contract in terms of which the employee sells his labor power. The particular nature of the office implies that in exchange for certain material guarantees (the assurance of a suitable standard of living), the functionary contracts a specific duty of fidelity to the office; he is in the service of an objective and impersonal goal, not of a person. This goal is inherent in the enterprise to which he is attached—state, commune, party or capitalist enterprise. Secondly, the bureaucrat enjoys a certain prestige with those he dominates. This prestige is usually guaranteed by a special status which confers on him certain rights sanctified by rules. Thirdly, the functionary is normally appointed by a superior authority. If it is true that there are certain bureaucracies whose members are elected, the pure type requires the principle of appointment. Hierarchical discipline is undermined when the functionary derives his power from the approval of electors, i.e., *from below* and *not from above*. Fourthly, the stability of employment is normally assured, even though a right of possession over the office is never recognized. Fifthly, the bureaucrat normally receives a remuneration in the form of a salary determined by the nature of employment and, possibly, by seniority. Sixthly, parallel to the hierarchical order of the bureaucracy a hierarchy of salaries is established: *the majority of functionaries desire that promotions be made as mechanically as possible*. Max Weber also indicates the role of certain factors in whose absence the bureaucracy would not completely develop. For example, its structure is not definitively established until the

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natural economy has been eliminated, i.e., until capitalism dominates society. Furthermore, the emergence of democracy allows the substitution of an administration of anonymous functionaries, detached from every particular social milieu and devoted to tasks of universal significance, for the traditional administration by notables, provided with local authority. Finally, Weber goes so far as to identify the movement of bureaucratization with the process of capitalist rationalization. More than the quantitative development of administrative tasks, what appears decisive is their qualitative change, the necessity for a large enterprise, whatever its nature, to envisage its activities from a strictly technical viewpoint and to obtain a predictability or a calculability of results as exact as possible. Bureaucracy in this sense is the social form most adequate to the capitalist organization of production and to a society based on it. The elimination of personal relations, the subordination of all activities to the application of a norm linked to an objective goal, makes it into a model of economic rationality established by industrial capitalism. Here, from a technical viewpoint, Max Weber does not hesitate to judge modern bureaucracy as superior to all other forms of organization.

It does not follow, however, that the development of bureaucracies must affect the nature of a political and economic regime, no matter how necessary they might seem once certain conditions are fulfilled. On the contrary, Weber claims that the numerical importance of this form of organization does not in any way determine its relation to power. The proof is that the state bureaucracy accomodates itself to diverse regimes—as demonstrated by France, where the state bureaucracy has remained remarkably stable. The proof lies also in the fact that during war, the bureaucratic staff of a conquered country is used by the foreign power, and continues to carry out its administrative tasks. In principle, bureaucracy is indifferent to the interests and values of a political system, i.e., it is an organ at the service of rulers located somewhere between the rulers and those who are ruled.

These analyses do not reveal their full meaning until they are located within a certain methodological perspective. Weber sees bureaucracy only as a type of social organization. Actually, bureaucracies do not necessarily realize their pure form: certain empirical conditions are needed in order that the various characteristics be simultaneously present. But once defined, the type makes the impure forms intelligible. Even when Weber states that the process of bureaucratization and of capitalist rationalization are closely tied together, this could be misleading. Historical explanations are something different from the determination of a social type.

Thus, the method partly determines its results. If bureaucracy is seen as essentially neutral in relation to an economic and social system, and it appears as having no historical goal, it is because Weber sees it from a purely formal viewpoint, as a type of organization, and not as a specific

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social stratum which, in establishing a certain set of relations between its members, generates its own history. Consequently, Weber cannot deal with "state socialism" without prejudice. According to him, bureaucracy can adjust more easily to state socialism than it can to bourgeois democracy. Yet, the history of state socialism is alien to that of bureaucracy. Strangely enough, Weber's conclusions on this point are similar to those of some Marxists, although inspired by different principles. In the eyes of these Marxists, state bureaucracy is alien to the social dialectic obtaining at the level of relations of production. For Weber a sequence of events can be reconstituted to make sense out of the development of state socialism. Although favored by these events, however, bureaucratization does not generate them. Yet, certain historical developments can be adduced to refute this thesis even more easily than Marx's account which is concerned with an empirical description. In the system resulting from the Russian revolution, which Weber calls "state socialism" (an expression which need not be criticized here), bureaucracy is not *actually* alien to power. The future state leaders come out of it: Stalin made a career in the party bureaucracy. For a long time he sought the highest position before obtaining it; he added to his functions of party secretary those of the state bureaucracy before becoming the master of power. Just because his rule had a charismatic character does not mean that he was independent of the bureaucracy: the latter was the permanent foundation of his power. While charisma can disappear or change its character with the death of the dictator, the new power will reconstitute itself on the basis of the bureaucracy. The political battles concerning the direction of the state take place in the upper reaches of the bureacracy. Extended to the limit, the state bureaucracy comes to take over final political and economic decisions, i.e., it becomes the focus of a new system. Had Weber accepted this, he would not have formulated his definition of the bureaucratic type as he did. Given the nature of his thought, he refused to regard bureaucracy has having a dynamic goal of its own. Thus, he was unable to investigate its *constitutive* traits, i.e., how it is rooted in social being and increases its power. The enumeration of criteria can be useful, but as long as what holds them together remains uninvestigated, the phenomenon described remains indeterminate. It matters little if one adds or subtracts a criterion: nothing allows one to decide if, in the absence of certain selected traits, a social complex is or is not bureaucratic. In order to decide, it is necessary to grasp the source of bureaucratization.

The above does not apply only to Weber, but to every attempt at a formal definition. Thus, Alain Touraine writes: "I call bureaucracy a system or organization where status and roles, laws and duties, conditions of access to a position, controls and sanctions, are defined by their location in a hierarchical line and thus by a certain delegation of authority. These two characteristics assume a third: that the fundamental decisions are not taken

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within the bureaucratic organization, the latter being only a system of transmission and of execution." This definition, obviously inspired by Weber—although more concise—can readily find many applications. It is easy to agree with Touraine when he claims that a ministry is a bureaucratic organization. The same cannot be said when he adds that an industrial enterprise is only *partially* so. If only the first characteristic of bureaucracy is found here, how can one claim that the enterprise is a partial bureaucracy? Does he not mean that a system of organization functioning according to fixed rules and in an impersonal manner already entails bureaucratization? If, on the other hand, it is admitted that the delegation of authority is decisive, and that workers do not participate in decisions, does it make sense to speak of a "bureaucratization of work"? This ambiguity grows when Michel Crozier, in elaborating on Touraine's definition, decides that "the Western workers in general, and French workers in particular, have already largely entered the channels of bureaucracy." He tells us that "delegation of authority is not necessary for participation in a bureaucratic system." It is characterized primarily by the existence of hierarchy. Does this mean that it is possible to participate in a system without possessing authority? In such a case, however, the problem would only be displaced, because relations within the bureaucratic system, between the authority and the executive sector dedicated to the manufacturing tasks and subjected to external authority, remain to be defined: the problem of knowing what role the relations of authority play in the constitution of the bureaucracy would remain. If it is necessary to admit, on the other hand, that a bureaucratic system on the whole does not necessarily locate these relations and that it is essentially characterized by the existence of a hierarchy, it is still necessary to determine the meaning of a bureaucratic hierarchy. The notion is vague enough to be applicable to very different structures: nothing is more hierarchical, for example, than the court of an hereditary monarchy. What is, then, the basis of hierarchy in bureaucracy? What justifies a vertical classification of functions and roles? The question is always reintroduced to evaluate the import of this or that criterion functioning in the conception of bureaucracy.

If Weber enumerated certain precise characteristics of bureaucracy without wishing to privilege any one of them which could have designated another social reality, it is because he had a strong feeling of its specificity. What is interesting in his analysis is what he links to this feeling, i.e., the multiplicity of bureaucratic forms of organization in modern society. Even if he fails, he at least forces us to confront his examples and types, and to come up with a new account.

Let us return to state bureaucracy, in order to ask what stratum of functionaries Weber dealt with. His definition surely applies to ministerial personnel, or at least to those functionaries whose duties carry certain responsibilities and whose 'office' entails a loyalty to the goal of the enter-

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prise. It is a professional formation having specialized knowledge in relation to subordinates assigned to purely executive tasks and whose labor-time is rigorously checked. But, strictly speaking, does this definition apply to all the functionaries who hold 'office'? Can one say, for instance, that according to Weber's framework, secondary school teachers are part of the French bureaucracy? The professor's personal position corresponds to Weber's characterization of the bureaucrat. Only on one point is the definition inadequate: participation in a system of authority. Access to a certain position or a level in the hierarchy does not give him power over subordinates. Similarly, his relation to his superiors is special. Obviously, he is subjected to administrative power. His lot depends on decisions taken at the managerial level. Yet, he largely escapes this power; the content of his activity is only very partially determined. His professional activity has its own goal. It is not justified in terms of a transformation of the object—which cannot be confused with the objective goal immanent in the ministerial enterprise. Finally, and above all, the secondary teacher is not in the process of *making a career* out of a job. He can hope for a change from one grade of seniority to another by the most rapid route. But, unlike bureaucrats, he does not seek a new function which will carry with it a higher social status, expanded responsibilities, and increased power over subordinates. The secondary school teacher remains largely an *isolated* individual. Undoubtedly, his activity is social, since it necessarily brings him into contact with a public, but it is not socialized. The division of labor can oblige him to specialize in a branch of teaching and thus to relate his activity to those of other teachers, without, however, generating a unity of production. In short, if we try to apply the concept of bureaucracy in the way Weber himself did (neglecting the value judgments implied in his description), we are led to exclude certain levels of functionaries from the framework of bureaucracy while also reforming his system of interpretation.

Since Weber did not integrate French high school teachers into his type, it follows that most of the characteristics, which he considers typical and which apply to our example, acquire an import only in certain precise cases. On the other hand, the absence of certain traits makes it difficult to speak of bureaucracy. In the first place, we see a connection between a certain hierarchy and a system of authority (of command-subordination, according to Weber), such that progression in the hierarchy corresponds to ammassing a higher status, new responsibilities, and more power. In the second place, Weber's idea that bureaucracy expects its members to identify with the undertaking appears at first glance to have only an apologetic function, but proves to have some sociological content. Such an identification assumes some professional activity linked to a *role*, itself determined through relation to other roles within the enterprise. The bureaucracy expects a subordinate to say "the Ministry" or "the Service" instead of "I," and by this act of identification, this person exists as a bureaucrat. But this act has no

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meaning for those whose work renders them strictly anonymous or for those who are individualized to the point where work as such becomes a sufficient justification of existence. In other words, what Weber calls the identification with an office is something other than professional consciousness. The latter finds its end in the act of production; the former, in the occupation of an office. This professional consciousness calls for a behavior conforming to the interest of the bureaucracy, in response to the expectations of hierarchical superiors—a behavior proper for each member of the bureaucracy in a similar situation. Thus, the activity of bureaucrats has two characteristics: it is technical and bureaucratic. It can lose the first, not the second. For example, the intense circulation of reports or of memos in offices serves only to express the necessity of each manifesting his function to others, and the bureaucracy functions only by virtue of a mutual recognition, constantly renewed according to determined ceremony. The volume of paper internally consumed by an administration allows one to measure its coefficient of bureaucratic integration. Stripped of all malevolent intentions, this shows that the bureaucracy can only act by constantly reflecting its activity in the mirror of its constitution. Finally, because of the place it gives to the system of command-subordination, Weber's analysis presupposes the existence of a geographical unity—a spatial framework determined by bureaucratic activities. Of course, all the members of a bureaucracy are not necessarily assembled in the same place, but their relations, the discipline that unites them, the control of each by the others, tends to circumscribe a specific world of offices.

A second example mentioned by Weber, that of the industrial enterprise, will allow us to test out his ideas and to specify ours. In the first place, we are again led to ask whether bureaucracy is only an organ of transmission and execution. Although an industrial enterprise is never autonomous and its functioning must take into account the interests of a financing capital on whom it depends, or the directives of a ministry if it is a question of a nationalized economy, the fact remains that management has a considerable power of decision. For the totality of decisions is not the action of an individual. Whatever the personality of the general manager, the power of decision is necessarily distributed among the different services and is concretized at the heart of each service only through a more or less collective participation in the solution of problems. To ask whether the direction is or is not distinct from the bureaucracy, is to pose a false problem. In every organization in which hierarchy results in delineating a function of direction —this transcends all those subordinated to it. Yet, the fact remains that, if the power that it formally holds was actually *composite*, i.e., if the decisions which fall to it by virtue of officially fixed allotment had actually been partially elaborated at various lower levels, it is still part of the framework which it dominates.

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On the other hand, as with state bureaucracy, the most important thing concerning the bureaucracy of an enterprise is its boundaries. Who are the *bureaucrats*? Who can be assimilated into the bureaucracy? Finally, who definitely falls outside this category?

Clearly, for Weber, the definition of the capitalist enterprise as a bureaucratic organization does not specify which sector, within the enterprise, could be designated as bureaucratic (although he goes so far as to claim that the capitalist enterprise offers an unequalled model of bureaucratic organization). To maintain, with Crozier, that workers are part of a bureaucracy as soon as they are placed with engineers and directors under a single hierarchical ladder, would have seemed extravagant to Weber, not because some of his criteria would have been contradicted, but because the position of a social group cannot be established only by considering its juridical status. The fact that some workers find their work assimilated to that of functionaries, says nothing about the specific nature of their work, or of their relations with other social strata within a given enterprise. The question of establishing the *real* situation of workers is not automatically answered if the enterprise is nationalized, the stability of work is guaranteed, or the workers are integrated with the *cadres* in the same hierarchical system—although these conditions could have important effects. In the industrial enterprise, the mass of workers is confined to purely operational tasks. The ordering of workshops, the number and distribution of positions, the rhythm of production, the duration and the intensity of work—all is prescribed by an administration functioning at a distance from the place of production and constitutes an alien and closed world with respect to it.

On the other hand, is it possible to consider all those who work in offices as the bureaucracy? First of all, technical services should not be confused with services of administration and exploitation. Although both share certain common norms of organization, it remains that the social relations are different by virtue of the different work performed. In short, the relations of authority and the connections with the enterprise are not similar. In technical services the engineers and the technicians, the draftsmen, have a relative autonomy by virtue of their professional knowledge. Control over labor can only be effective if the boss has a technical competence at least equal to that of his subordinates, i.e., his control must be considered a technically superior function. Social control could be practically nonexistent where the work requirements were of fixed duration, sufficing to establish a normal rhythm of output. Moreover, the technicians' autonomy is also measured by their ability to move from one enterprise to another by virtue of their knowledge. Generally speaking, the position of technicians depends more on the work performed than on his place in the social organization of the enterprise.

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The functioning of administrative services is something else. Here, at the bottom of the ladder, we find unskilled employees whose professional competence is rudimentary or nonexistent. Between them and the general management of the enterprise, the hierarchy of positions is a power hierarchy. The relations of dependence become determining and having a function defines one against a higher level, whether it is that of the departmental supervisor, a boss, or a director. Here the double nature of employment reappears. It answers to a professional activity and expresses an established social order in which the enterprise finds its concrete existence. In fact, from the top to the bottom of the ladder, relations are such that they always serve to reiterate the authoritarian structure of administration. This does not mean, however, that those located at the bottom of the ladder participate in the bureaucracy in the same way as those at the middle or upper levels. In certain respects, the employees are like workers, deprived of any authority. They are often paid less than certain hourly laborers. Thus, their work cannot be described as an 'office' and we cannot assume that they could identify with the goals of the enterprise. Nevertheless, they are not alien to the bureaucracy: they are the *dependents*. They often enter into the enterprise only when provided with references certifying their "good character." They cannot advance unless they prove their aptitude to obey commands: they live in the hope of moving to a higher status. Thus, the situation of the employee is ambiguous. He is not integrated into the bureaucratic system. He only endures it. Yet, everything tends to make him adhere to it, and he does so effectively when he accepts his superiors' ideal: promotion. Moreover, he is even less able to detach himself from the bureaucratic milieu since his work is determined by the social organization of the enterprise, and in extracting the resources that assure his subsistence, he perceives it as being as necessary as the organization itself.

Bureaucracy thus overflows the active core of middle and upper level functionaries tied to administrative and exploitative tasks: it is a hierarchy which plunges its roots even into the productive sector, where supervisors and foremen control the work of laborers. These functionaries hold real authority. Not only do they hold positions with official duties defined by a certain division of labor and submit to a certain discipline, but their function makes them participate in the power of management and leads them to identify with the enterprise as such. To say that they identify with it does not mean that they necessarily have a correct idea of the enterprise's interests nor even that they are led to place this above their own interests. In their eyes, the horizons of the enterprise are absolutely confused with those of their employment. They see the social order immanent in the enterprise as both natural and sacred, their own function as something other than a mere source of remuneration or of professional activity, but as the backbone of a system which needs their cooperation to subsist and expand.

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To possess a status apparently differentiating his position from that of mere laborers, to enjoy a prestige generating others' respect, to obtain a remuneration and material advantages assuring a privileged condition of existence, to belong to a milieu from which authority flows, where subordination is the other side of a command, with opportunities for promotion—all these are the traits of the bureaucrat.

Finally, the bureaucracy of the enterprise exemplifies the mystification implicit in a purely formal description. The latter assumes that bureaucratic organization is identical with the rational organization of the enterprise, insofar as it is technically required by production itself. For, as soon as we seek to locate the strictly bureaucratic sector and to emphasize a specific type of conduct, we discover a dialectic of socialization different from the dialectic of the division of labor. This does not mean that we can determine what an adequate social organization of the enterprise would be like at a given stage of the division of labor, since this depends on historical conditions resulting from technical evolution and class struggle, but rather, that bureaucratic organization has its own ends which cannot be deduced from the necessities imposed by the organization of production. Once it is recognized that, in addition to the manufacturing and the technical sectors, every large enterprise must deal with tasks pertaining to the administration of personnel, to the sale of products and to the purchase of primary materials and machines, to the determination of production costs, etc., it does not follow *naturally* that the specialized services function as they do in the real framework of the modern capitalist factory. The requirements of planning, coordination, and information do not necessarily create a determined social order. This order is instituted by virtue of a social activity. From this viewpoint, it is essential to grasp how the bureaucracy creates its order. *The more activities are fragmented, services diversified, specialized and partitioned, the more numerous the structural levels and the delegations of authority at each level, the more coordination and control sectors multiply because of this dispersion. Thus, the bureaucracy prospers.*

The status of a bureaucrat is measured by the number of secretaries and employees who depend on him, by the number of telephones and machines at his service, more generally, by the authority allocated to his domain of organization. As soon as conditions allow, he seeks to expand his sphere of influence and to preserve it. This tendency engenders the formation of cliques and hidden wars between departments which is stimulated by their separation. Each department is quick to blame others for errors or delays in carrying out a program. But at the same time, since this tendency responds to a common aspiration, it works itself out. The more the bureaucrats multiply, the more complicated the system of personal dependence becomes, the more the bureaucracy as a whole becomes a rich and differentiated milieu. As this process intensifies, bureaucrats derive a growing sense of

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their own objectivity. The bureaucracy loves bureaucrats as much as bureaucrats love the bureaucracy.

The consequences of this situation can appear paradoxical. Weber is right in claiming that the capitalist enterprise offers bureaucracy a privileged framework for development, that the latter finds a motive for its organization in the process of economic rationalization: the need for rigorous calculability and of a predictability favoring the emergence of a special stratum of administrators and imposing on them a certain kind of structure. Yet, this stratum elaborates its conduct, actively intervenes in the structuring, and, located in historically created conditions, develops while following its own interests. Thus one can see what is behind the mask of law and impersonality, the proliferation of unproductive functions, the play of personal relations, and the folly of authority.

Our third example will provide a kind of counter proof, since it presents a bureaucracy which is apparently extremely different from what we have just seen: the mass party. It is not surprising that Weber also refers to this example. Weber did not fail to observe that there is a close connection between the party and state bureaucracy since he had witnessed the emergence of a state bureaucracy in Russia under the Communist Party. Yet, one wonders why this did not lead him to revise his definition of bureaucratic organization. Actually it is not sufficient to claim that the mass party is led by a body of "professionals" in order to associate them with state functionaries or with managers. Most of Weber's criteria do not apply to them. In the first place, if one considers the organization of the party, it becomes obvious that the bureaucracy is not only an organ for executing and transmitting orders: the management becomes part of the Politbureau or a general secretary emerges from the bureaucracy. It matters little that an individual or a handful of individuals holds all real power. They have obtained it only by rising through the hierarchy of the party and keep it only because they are supported by a stratum of bureaucrats who direct party activities according to their directives, justify their decisions and apply them, while ousting all opposition. If this stratum falls apart, the power of the leaders dissipates. In the second place, the functions of bureaucrats are well fixed by rules, but they do not form a whole as in the structure of a state administration or an enterprise. There are no strict rules regulating the passage from one position to another; there is no hierarchy of salaries. The bureaucrats do not enjoy a special, officially defined status distinguishing them from the rank and file. Access to the highest positions does not depend on technical knowledge linked to a profession, and if the principle of nominating leaders by the main organs is recognized, it coexists with a principle of election, since these organs themselves are assemblies composed of delegates elected by the rank and file. Finally, it is not even necessary to be remunerated by the party in order to have an important central function in the hierarchy. This particular characteristic of the party bureaucracy

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follows from the position that it occupies in society as a whole. Its function is not defined by the division of labor. Rather, it is an institution based on voluntary participation which attempts to influence power—either to participate in it, or to capture it by rallying a mass of individuals around a program of demands. That a group of professionals is formed in the party in the process of coordinating its activities changes nothing in the formal definition and ascribes to this sector characteristics apparently very different from those found in industrial enterprises.

If so, how can one speak of the mass party as a bureaucratic institution? This question leads us closer to what we have sought to formulate since the beginning of our analysis: what is the social nature of the bureaucracy? If we characterize mass parties as bureaucratic institutions, it is not because we can define the parties by criteria equally applicable to industrial enterprises. Things are more complicated. In the party, we distinguish a specific sector where functions are hierarchical by virtue of participation in power; where decisions are taken in the absence of any control from below, where responsibilities are distributed in an authoritarian way, where organizational discipline detracts from the free examination of decisions, where a continuity of roles, actions and persons is institutionalized, thus making the ruling minority practically permanent. In other words, in the party bureaucracy appears as the antithesis of democracy. But this does not make much sense until we understand how the bureaucratic organization is constituted. Its genesis is all the more *comprehensible* when it does not *immediately* depend *on economic conditions.* As previously mentioned, the party is based on voluntary participation motivated by an ideological agreement on a program. This entails no *particular* form of organization. The technical organizational requirement comes about only when the party attracts large masses. But the coordination of the activities of small, local sections, of assuring the best propaganda, of properly managing the assets gathered among the militants, does not necessitate any specific social milieu. It is as a result of *choice* that this milieu turns out to be bureaucratic. Choice here need not mean that individuals deliberately decide to create a bureaucratic organization. It only means that a certain behavior becomes predominant, with certain requirements coming to take absolute precedence, others fading.

Since the party adherence is a function of voluntary participation based on the shared acceptance of some ideas, it would seem to follow that the maintenance of this participation and agreement is essential to the life of the organization. Since the party claims to articulate a collective will, and presents itself as a locus of cooperation, it would seem to lose its *raison d'être* if it used coercion with its members. Furthermore, *formally* it could not do so since the members are not dependent on the party for their livelihood. Yet, the party must operate within society as a whole as a coherent force, maintaining continuity of action, permanently binding those who

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participate in it, and finding a structure which guarantees its unity, independently of the uncertain participation of its militants.

Now, if the existence of the mass party generates this alternative, bureaucracy comes about by giving the latter considerations absolute primacy over the former and it does so in a way that makes its existence increasingly more necessary and its choices irreversible. From the very beginning, bureaucrats come into being as those whose work safeguards the party's existence and unity, while their activity in the party makes them indispensable. But this activity is peculiar. This becomes clear as soon as one compares it with the activity of ordinary militants: it is based on the very institution. It is what is usually called an organization activity. But the term is imprecise because it hides essential features: that it is always a question of directing the militants' work in a way that reinforces the party's existence and power. The organization's fundamental aspect is the multiplication of party organs: the more cells and sections there are, the more the life of the institution is differentiated, the more is its power materialized, the more the leaders appointed to be in charge of coordinating each sector. Thus, the efficiency of bureaucratic work is measured by the leaders' ability to preserve and extend the field of activity that they organize. This measurement, however, can be formulated in objective communicable terms if one considers only the formal aspect of the bureaucrat's activity. This is what gives rise to the fetishism of the agenda at party meetings, festivals or commemorations. This is why what is called activism—a feverish and vain agitation—has become routine. The number and diversity of the ceremonies from which the institution derives its daily justification goes hand in hand with the proliferation of bureaucrats. If they are entirely at the party's service, they become professionals, although they need not be that in order to act as such. It is only necessary that their activity be precisely specified, that their aim be mainly party preservation and that it be carried out according to the leaders' instructions, which makes it seem as a form of employment. On the whole, bureaucracy is this milieu for which the party structure is both necessary, sacred, and irremovable. But this milieu generates its own structure: in identifying with the goals justifying the party's existence, it makes the party—to paraphrase Marx—its private property: it sees itself as necessary, sacred and irremovable. The defense of the party is the bureaucracy's self-defense. But this implies a particular interpretation of the party's goals which results in the distortion of its original vocation. In fact, the party cannot intervene directly in the social struggle as it should according to its principles, nor can it be the locus of ideological discussion without running the risk of self-transformation or even self-destruction. Thus, the bureaucratic group feels threatened as soon as a principle of change is introduced in the party: it is naturally conservative.

This conservatism inspires all inter-bureaucratic relations: the cult of

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authority, the will to control all activities, the value of prestige around the functions of responsibility, etc. All these are too well known traits to require further elaboration. In the last analysis, the bureaucracy's behavior has its logic. The party, in fact, is not a purely artificial organism, born out of ideological motivations. It exists as a mass organization within society as a whole. Not only does it seek power, but presently it penetrates, in various degrees, all sectors of society. This penetration assures it the allegiance of an important part of its militants who are employed in services where the party controls recruitment, either directly, or through a friendly union. Although it can appear as an incomplete bureaucracy if seen as an isolated institution, the party reveals certain material determinations of bureaucratic stability, when considered within society as a whole.

Of course, the examples which have been chosen and purposely borrowed from Weber present common traits. Most of all, however, they allow us to deal with the phenomenon in a certain way. In our eyes, the bureaucracy is a group which makes a certain mode of organization prevail, develops under certain conditions, expands along with certain states of the economy and technology only by virtue of a social activity. To attempt to grasp bureaucracy without focusing on a type of specific behavior is condemned to failure from the very beginning. Bureaucracy exists only through bureaucrats and their common aim to form a milieu apart from those whom they dominate, to participate in socialized power, and to interdefine each other in a hierarchy which guarantees them either material status or prestige.

To stress the phenomena of social behavior is not to reduce bureaucracy to a sum of similar actions. The activity of the isolated individual is unintelligible: it becomes meaningful only when placed in the context of a group. In fact, the bureaucracy comes about in an immediate socialization of activities and behavior. Here the group is not a category of activity or of socio-economic status; it is a concrete milieu where each draws his own identity. It is here that we can locate the link between bureaucracy and mass institutions. It is in ministries, unions, parties and industrial enterprises that the bureaucracy finds its adequate form because of the structural unity, the interconnection of the tasks, the number of jobs, the proximity of men within each sector, the perspective offered by a growing institutional development, the volume of capital engaged, etc. All of this defines a field of social power. It follows that the bureaucrats' identification with their enterprises is a natural mediation in consciousness whereby a group acquires its own identity. But this identification must not conceal the fact that in reality the bureaucracy does not have its destiny strictly defined by the technical structure of the mass institution. It also makes its own destiny. As the agent of a particular stratification, it multiplies positions and services, partitions various activities, generates artificial controls and coordinations, and reduces an ever growing mass of workers into merely mechanical functions in order to exercise its authority at every level.

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Bureaucracy as Class

At this point, we can examine the thesis that the bureaucracy is a class. Undoubtedly, there is a ruling class in the USSR. Those who persist in denying it do so by reiterating quotations from Marx according to which the abolition of private property entails the disappearance of the ruling class, without seeing that at a deeper level a class opposition has been reintroduced in the relations of production. Here, the ownership of the means of production is no longer decisive. What determines the proletariat as an exploited class is its exclusion from the administration of production and its reduction to merely mechanical functions. What determines the position of a ruling class facing the proletariat is the fact that all decisions concerning economic life (i.e., concerning the volume and distribution of investments, wages, intensity and duration of labor, etc), are made by a particular social stratum. What is relevant here is not to discuss the class nature of the USSR, but to emphasize that bureaucracy cannot be seen as a class without analyzing its dynamics within the context of traditional capitalist society and the mass institutions where bureaucracies develop. To merely define it there as a parasitical organ, or as a simple economic category, is to overlook how through its specific behavior, it creates a *power base*, and how it uses circumstances to consolidate and grow. On the other hand, to recognize its historicity and to establish the horizons of its activity is to locate a world which it has made in its image and where it is the ruling class. In the last analysis, the genesis of the bureaucracy in Russia is intelligible only if it is related to the social type which, in different forms, obtains in all modern countries.

But this observation concerning the conditions leading to the formation of a ruling class after the Russian revolution applies only to a special case where the bureaucracy has built its power through a specifically social activity. If it is claimed that today this class is what it is only because of its function in production, planning and the nationalization which guarantees its material basis, then it becomes difficult to claim that it results from a *political* bureaucracy whose earlier versions were not concerned with the extraction of surplus value within the context of modern industry, but with the concentration of authority in the hands of a ruling minority, the exclusion of the masses from decision-making and from the information pertinent to these decisions, the hierarchization of functions and the differentiation of wages, the rigorous division of competences; in short, the scientific organization of inequality such that it becomes the principle of a new form of class oppression. Certainly, the party bureaucracy has not artificially created a whole new world. Yet, it would be inadequate to simply say that it has been served by circumstance. The new type of class domination was prepared by the destruction of the political and economic power of the old owners, the state's taking over large sectors of production, the

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existence of an already concentrated industry with a modern administration, and the example of large industrial capitalist countries with a growing fusion of capital and the state. But this domination forced its way through only with a party which, by means of ideology, terror, and privilege, melted elements torn from all the classes of the old Russian society into the same mold.

It is inadequate, however, to point out the existence of a privileged class in the USSR, or even to examine its own genesis, in order to comprehend what bureaucracy actually is within the whole society that it dominates. An analysis limited to exploitation within relations of production altogether misses the nature of the bureaucratic class. Such an analysis would locate the privileged strata. But the factory managers and the planners are not the only members of the ruling class and all those who are privileged are not necessarily part of these groups. As in the industrial enterprise, a mere foreman, as opposed to an engineer, can be considered a bureaucrat because he has authority and he identifies with management against workers. Similarly, on a social level, some union or political functionaries can be considered members of the bureaucracy while some technicians, although earning higher salaries, are not members of the ruling class and do not share their values or life-style. The social nature of the bureaucracy cannot be deduced from its economic function. In order to be understood, it must be observed. In the absence of an observation, the question dealt with here prevents a schematic conception of history. Undoubtedly, in the USSR, as in Western countries, there is more than one class facing the industrial and agricultural proletariat. The bureaucracy is not composed either by the ensemble of the working class nor simply by some thousands or tens of thousands of leaders supported by the political police: one can only define it by pointing to the solidarity which unites its members and crystalizes them in the exercise of domination.

It is possible, however, to indicate certain traits of this class both by examining its constitution as well as by extrapolating from the testimonies of observers, or of political leaders aware of the difficulties that the regime must confront. Here two remarks are in order. First of all, the bureaucracy involves a mode of social participation different from that of the bourgeoisie. Bureaucrats do not derive private power from a professional activity which allows them to develop as a ruling class. They do not have a common interest which could generate a power to manage society in their name. They are immediately members of their class, and their personal attributes are a function of this connection: they are what they are only by virtue of their dependence from the state power which grounds and maintains the social hierarchy, i.e., political power and economic power are merged within the bureaucratic class. To participate in the appropriation of surplus value for them is the same thing as participating in the system of domination. What this means is that the bureaucracy is the privileged

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terrain of totalitarianism, i.e., of a regime where all social activities are measured by the same criterion of validity dictated by state power. Here pluralism of systems of behavior and of values immediately constitutes a menace not only to the ruling minority but to the ruling class itself whose integration depends entirely on its submission to the established power. Secondly, in spite of the reinforced tendency to make a single authority prevail at all levels, as already indicated, the bureaucracy cannot avoid conflicts which not only contrapose groups against each other, but also contrapose bureaucracies against each other. If the above is correct, bureaucracies exist full-fledged within mass institutions: in parties, unions, in various branches of production and various cultural sectors. In each of these contexts they attempt to grow and monopolize an increasing part of social capital in order to expand in as broad a field as possible. There is no pre-established harmony within the bureaucracy, and the unity of the class does not 'naturally' prevail: it involves a constant activity of unification. The rivalry of bureaucratic apparatuses reinforced by the struggle of inter-bureaucratic cliques is only managed by the intervention of a political principle at all the levels of social life. But the party which applies this principle is itself the broadest and most complete bureaucracy. If class unity is inconceivable without it since its mediation "politicizes" all of society so that the state tends to merge with civil society, its presence and its natural tendency to control and subordinate everything to its own power generates the sharpest tension within the ruling class. Thus, the bureaucratic system is unceasingly torn by internal conflicts, certainly different but not any less dreadful than those typical of bourgeois regimes.

To maintain that the bureaucracy is the ruling class in the USSR does not settle the question of its status in large industrialized Western nations. From one viewpoint, the formation of a bureaucratic class seems to be an extension of bureaucratic organizations: they blossom within mass institutions because technological developments make human activities increasingly more interdependent and impose a socialization of administrative tasks parallel to that of production. From another viewpoint, this class requires such a political integration and subordination to state power that it cannot operate without instituting a system of total domination. Yet, these two viewpoints are not incompatible; they allow us to see bureaucracies as a type of social behavior whose success or failure is not preordained but is a function of a complex of historical conditions. Bureaucratic organizations have an affinity for regimes where the definitive elimination of private property assures the broadest possible development and their integration within a new class structure. Similarly, rooted in bourgeois society and fettered in their development by their natural conservatism, as well as by the profits they derive from the established mode of production, they prove incapable of doing more than invading bourgeois society, i.e., incapable of transforming the system of power. In other words, nothing

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warrants the claim that, in the absence of a radical social upheaval which would sweep away old regimes (as happened in Russia by workers' and peasants' revolution, and in the peoples' democracies by war), bureaucratic organizations would naturally overcome their division and become integrated within a new state apparatus as parts of a ruling class.

Furthermore, bureaucracies exhibit an *indeterminacy* which is the source of the difficulties encountered by theory. The bureaucracy is not a class as long as it is not the ruling class, and when it becomes so, it remains essentially dependent on a political activity of unification.

To maintain that bureaucrats are already a class within all of society, would mean that they are distinguishable because of their particular interests, values, or life-style. Actually, they are different only in terms of their aggregation and by how they gain their status as members of a collectivity. Surely, this trait is important. The interrelations of bureaucrats within each institution correspond to a specific social model and outline a new global structure. But so long as this structure is not realized, the bureaucracy does not constitute a separate world: bourgeois society assimilates it. It is inadequate to point out that high state functionaries are members of administrative councils, or that important groups derive part of their income from the stocks that they own, since this phenomenon of embourgeoisification is comparable to a similar phenomenon of aristocratization of the bourgeoisie, who, during certain epochs, rushed to buy land and nobility titles. What is important is that the difference in the appropriation of wealth is not linked to production relations, while in the context of society as a whole the various bureaucracies split along traditional lines thus remaining heterogeneous and unaware of their identity—at least in the absence of a social crisis. Moreover, polycentrism, which is part of the essence of bureaucracies meant to crystalize into particular institutions prevents the development of class unity.

From another viewpoint, the bureaucracy retains a principle of indeterminacy even when this unity is attained: it does not exist apart from a social form of power. It is not an economic category but comes about by participating in a system of domination. Thus, there is a great temptation to deny that the bureaucracy is a class where it is seen to rule or, in specific social contexts, where it multiplies within bourgeois societies. If, on the contrary, it is claimed that it is a ruling class in the USSR, there is a tendency to neglect or underemphasize its basic constitution, the *change in the function of the political* in bureaucratic society, the heterogeneity of organizations, the intra-bureaucratic battles, and the differences of integration of the various strata within the class. Most of all, this class could be seen as a general model in the process of realization throughout, as if bourgeois society must *naturally* turn into a bureaucratic society because of capital concentration. Economic rationalization and bureaucratization are then associated, and the latter is seen as the adequate expression of the former,

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forgetting that rationalization obtains within a regime based on exploitation and that bureaucratization is part of a system of domination. By stressing the phenomenon of bureaucratic parasitism, it is possible to ignore that the bureaucracy simultaneously penetrates social life and poses itself as an end: it responds to technical needs but also subordinates them to power imperatives.

The study of bureaucracy, and the discussion that it calls forth, become fruitful only if these simplifications are rejected. Then the true questions can be asked, and advances toward their solution can be made on the condition that the following principles are observed: (1) Attention must be paid to the various bureaucracies instead of immediately swallowing up this image in a concept which can then be handled with such an ease that it deprives bureaucracy of all content; (2) Bureaucracy must be seen as a *social* formation, as a system of meaningful behavior, and not merely as a system of formal organization. This implies a historical definition of the phenomenon as a human enterprise with its own goals; (3) Special emphasis must be placed on the relations of the bureaucracy with other social strata and particularly among various bureaucratic groups within a given institution; (4) From the social nature of the bureaucracy (its sociality) no deduction should be made concerning a future based on a whole series of historical conditions which are extensions of established structures and events; (5) The question concerning the class nature of bureaucracy must be posed. The answer must avoid a comparison between the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy. There must be a description of the specific participation of bureaucracy in society as a whole, along with the connection of its political, economic, and cultural determinations instead of relying on an *a priori* definition (having alleged universal significance whereas it is actually an abstraction from the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie) of the essential and the accidental features of a class; (6) In studying a particular bureaucracy, the self-image of top bureaucrats must not be uncritically accepted. The whole bureaucratic milieu must be considered in order to define the bureaucratic mentality and behavior, by relying on the workers who are most directly affected by the bureaucrats and who, as a result, cannot be easily misled: those people whom the bureaucrats dominate.[4]

4. The analysis of bureaucracy by the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* group differs from that of Trotsky and Burhnam as follows (this section originally appeared in *Arguments*, no. 4 [June-September, 1957]): "The ideas of Trotsky and Burnham differ qualitatively from those of the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* group. Trotsky always saw the bureaucracy as a parasitic transitory formation typical of a particular historical juncture—as a fungus grown on the socialist organism that a new revolutionary wave would readily sweep away. He always rejected the idea that it represented a social class and a new social type. The existence of the bureaucracy did not alter the nature of productive relations: the Russian proletariat simply had to chase it away as one does with a bad manager, since there already were socialist relations. *Socialisme ou Barbarie* denounced Trotsky's formalism by showing the absurdity of a socialist society where the producers are expropriated from all managerial tasks. It substituted the idea of a *bureaucratic society* for that of a *bureaucracy in society*, i.e., a society which produced and

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Postscript (1970)

The above text deals with a theme which seems distant from present concerns. For young readers, who are often the ones most engaged in political struggle, this distance is even greater, since they cannot remember the proper context. Those today who are between twenty and thirty years old, have not experienced the overwhelming influence of the Communist Party during Stalin's life. The 1953 workers' insurrection in East Berlin, for

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reproduced itself by separating the producing masses from a social stratum which collectively expropriated surplus value. Such a *bureaucratic society* was made possible by the rigorous integration of all bureaucratic strata by the state apparatus. Furthermore, *Socialisme ou Barbarie* also pointed to the function of the official ideology—borrowed from Marxism-Leninism—in the interests of the bureaucracy. Finally, *Socialisme ou Barbarie* claimed that Trotsky's inability to analyze the bureaucratic phenomenon was linked to his general notion of revolutionary struggle (the absolute pre-eminence of the party) and of socialist society (state centralization) which inadvertently facilitated the advent of a new society of exploitation.

Burnham's merit, on the other hand, is to have pointed out the separation in modern capitalism between production and ownership, and the formation of a new type of society. But this is where the analogy with *Socialisme ou Barbarei* ends since the latter rejects Burnham on the following points: (1) Burnham considers the factory managers as the members of the new class and the real masters of society. He fails to see the changes in the phenomenon of management which now comes to engulf society as a whole. He merely substitutes the managers for the private capitalists without realizing that the process which places power within the context of the enterprise and in the hands of managers tends to dispossess every sector of its autonomy and subordinate everything to the state apparatus. Furthermore, he fails to see that the bureaucratic mode of social domination generates new relations between its members whose power no longer flows from their private economic activity. They are able to pose themselves as a separate class by rigorously subordinating themselves to a control organ which guarantees a permanent integration through the police and ideology. Hence, Burnham's acrobatics in trying to explain two otherwise inexplicable phenomena: in the USSR the bureaucracy is staffed by a stratum of political functionaries and the factory mangers, whatever their influence, do not hold power. (2) Burnham believes that the rise of industrial managers is a result of their scientific knowledge, against which the mass of producers are seen as ignorant. Accordingly, the managers are indispensable and without them the factory could not function. Against this view, *Socialisme ou Barbarie* claims that (a) the continuous socialization of work has exploded the managers' old tasks since now the working of the enterprise is guaranteed at all levels by collective organs, and that the existence of a separate managerial apparatus answers the social need of exploitation rather than technological requirements; (b) constant conflicts tear factory organization apart, with the social hierarchy destroying cooperation and generating an irreducible irrationality; (c) managers confront these basically insurmountable conflicts daily in the attempt to facilitate cooperation and initiative among producers while keeping them in coercion, isolation and inertia. In other words, *Socialisme ou Barbarie* explains the existence of bureaucracy in terms of the class struggle and not as a function of technological progress. (3) Against Burnham, *Socialisme ou Barbarie* sees the contradictions of earlier capitalism to have been transposed and even intensified within the bureaucratic society. Actually, the advent of the bureaucracy is the result of a fundamental historical tendency described by Marx as "the socialization of society." The bureaucracy seeks to coordinate all of the activities that it deals with, have all individuals participate in the social totality by formally denying all class distinctions, while radically contradicting this tendency by its very existence, its system of oppression, its hierarchy, and its fragmentation. It itself pays for this contradiction with an unrelenting internal struggle. This double movement is the reason why bureaucracy exists only in the horizon of communism, and generates the need for its own destruction. In other words, for *Socialisme ou Barbarie,* bureaucracy is a total social phenomenon which is intelligible only in the perspective of modern history and class struggle. The theory of bureaucracy is the theory of revolution."

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some, the first to shake up the image of socialism as it existed in the popular democracies, Krushchev's de-Stalinization begun at the Twentieth Congress, the Hungarian and Polish uprisings—these are merely part of one's personal pre-history, unable to enter into lived experience, thus permitting one to assimilate them. These young people do not remember how progressive intellectuals rallied around the Stalinist banner, returning for the audacity of an independent gesture a redoubled fidelity—a time when the Left was almost entirely limited to Trotskyists, some branches growing into three or four tiny "groupuscles," or when the Communists labelled the Trotskyists fascists, treating them accordingly when they had the chance, with the result that the leftist press did not give them even the slightest mention.

Does this mean that the 1950s can awaken only the interest of the historian and that what we wrote twelve or twenty years ago has only documentary value? Does it mean that, in order to comprehend the present and to attempt to set the landmarks of change, it is necessary to look at Czechoslovakia rather than to Hungary, to study Brezhnev's last speech rather than Krushchev's Report, to challenge the Sartre who supports *La Cause du Peuple* rather than the one who, in 1952, gave an apology for Communist politics in France?

The questions posed at that time have not become obsolete and, in spite of changes which occasionally modify the practice and mentality of social actors, or the interpretation of ideologies, a considerable part of the historical context remains, along with the same choices and conflicts.

The distinction between what constitutes the present and the past, of what belongs to new horizons and what is lost in the distance is subtler than we are tempted to believe when considering only the generation gap or in pointing to some major signs of change—which can effectively designate the novelty of a conjuncture while hiding the continuity of the traits of a socio-historical structure. The past is not really past until it ceases to haunt us and until we have become free to rediscover it out of curiosity. But so long as the images and the words continue to fill our thoughts and excite our passions, at a distance from men and events that we have not experienced, they fully participate in the present, whether they serve to destroy, or whether we need them to preserve the framework of our life.

Thus, perhaps Bolshevism, or its Trotskyist variant, and the history of the Russian revolution no longer have any 'real' efficacy. Maybe they only provide fighting symbols for leftist militants whose goals escape them, or an identification to an imaginary community of revolutionaries, in the absence of which their opposition to the regimes in power disappears. Maybe the concept of revolution itself now passes through unprecedented paths. Maybe the USSR Communist leaders themselves need not only Stalin's ghost, but the Bolshevik legend as well, in order to successfully carry out the prosaic tasks, impossible to enumerate, of a new ruling class. What is certain is that

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today, the glorification of heroes and the repetition of old speeches, always accompany action and mobilize faith.

After twenty years the sources of inspiration have not spoiled. At least for a fraction of the new generations in Western societies, they are much more alive than for their elders. And in Eastern countries, the same references support both the opposition as well as the politics of the masters of power. It follows that the temptation to dissipate certain illusions by examining the great revolutionary politics of the past, to reveal what has been hidden (most often to protect its imitation) is even more necessary in the present than when they had such a great importance for those of us in *Socialisme ou Barbarie*. I discovered how Trotsky, who for so long we considered the guarantor of the revolutionary attitude, combined the fetishism of the party, the fetishism of the state's 'socialist bases,' and the repression of worker oppositions. Thus, we speak for a tiny number. The circle has expanded and has also intensified the equivocal nature of militancy where the will for emancipation joins the narrow subjection to tradition and the taste for the sacred. Of course, the critique of Bolshevism and Trotskyism has gained ground: the documents of the Workers' Opposition in Russia are better known, we can read Voline, Archinov and Pannekoek while the Kronstadt revolt sometimes has the value of an archetype. But it is too easy to believe that it is enough to substitute a 'good' tradition for a 'bad' one. Too often we are satisfied with changing the symbols without renouncing the authority imputed to the pure image of a founder. Even those who see how the party separates itself from the exploited strata, thus creating the kernel of a new social formation, end up by transferring to the class as such the sacredness hitherto invested in an institution or in men. Thus, questions which emerged when there were militants in the Communist Party, and which burst their system of beliefs, are suddenly extinguished under this new certitude that evil is intrinsic to *organizations*, while obstinately refusing to look for the conditions of their genesis in the history of the proletariat.

Thought could well free itself of certain images. What prevents it is the relationship we entertain with the representation of the past. It is the mythic function which we force it to play in order to assure ourselves of a truth already given which will not betray us, in order to finally exorcise the indetermination which is reborn ceaselessly in our living history.

In vain one relies on the movement which separates us from our old beliefs. Of course, we have managed to destroy some illusions. But the soil on which these illusions grew nourishes other germs. When we taste the bitter ecstasy of overturning our first theses, it is perhaps then that we remain the most captive of their principles. In any case, so many desires are invested on the political level that the progress of knowledge displaces its own boundaries instead of suppressing them, and each time new doors open before us, we must assume that elsewhere others are closed.

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We can easily see limits in others. We are struck by their inability before a troublesome event to draw the inevitable conclusions that we have long since reached. Thus, only recently there were the militant Communist intellectuals, indignant at the Russian intervention in Czechoslovakia. For once, they condemned USSR policies and even labelled them imperialist. But it was to denounce a "tragic error" and to proclaim that a socialist state cannot act like a great power, without disavowing its principles. Their audacity was great. They rose against a hitherto unchallengeable authority. They exposed themselves to exclusion from their party. Yet, they never asked themselves whether it makes any sense to speak of socialism in the case of a state that oppresses its neighbors on economic, political, military, and cultural levels. They defended the "democratic" demands of Czech Communists and they criticized the governing group in the USSR, along with their servile managers in the other countries. They did so, however, only in order to oppose liberalism to authoritarianism, innovative methods to conservatism, as if the conflicts were not rooted in social relations and the political police terror was an accidental trait of the workers' state—the effect of a bad interpretation of revolutionary strategy or, even better, the sign of the ambitions of an intolerant clique. They deplored an error, but were quick to limit it to the case of Czechoslovakia. These ardent defenders of national communism, who still applaud the entrance of Russian tanks into Budapest, shamelessly maintain that the Hungarian insurrection was the work of reactionaries and American agents. Besides, while condemning Moscow, has it not been pointed out by others that opposition to the USSR carries the germs of counter-revolution? How could they explain that a regime of popular democracy was able to last twenty years almost entirely withdrawn from exchange with capitalist countries and fused into the socialist bloc while preserving a bourgeoisie so strong as to endanger it at the leaders' first error? While supporting Dubcek, they were worrying about the consequences of reforms. They based all their arguments on the defense of socialism, whilch they saw present everywhere under Brezhnev, Novotny, Dubcek or Husak. The Counter-revolution was seen sprouting everywhere so that they would not dare take a step in one direction without immediately beating a retreat. But one should also consider the position of certain non-party leftists: they also surrounded themselves with strange hesitations. The Czechs' taste for liberty raises their suspicion. What in bourgeois society they consider the most precious acquisition—however fragile, insufficient, and falsified in practice—they are ready to brand as a sign of corruption in Czechoslovakia. They themselves evoke anti-socialist forces, forgetting that they do not believe in the reality of socialism of the peoples' democracies. Thus, they remain caught in the representations which they thought they had discarded. So powerful and so widespread is the idea that the world has been divided into two camps since the Russian revolution, that they take it up again, in spite of all they have learned about exploitation and oppression

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in the USSR. They seemed to be certain of the fact that the abolition of private property ends in the fusion of Capital and State. But then they mechanically repeated that all that American imperialism profits from is reactionary, and that relations between East and West ultimately decide the revolutionary significance of an event. Thus the whole casuistry elaborated by Sartre and other progressive intellectuals at the time of the Hungarian insurrection has not lost its effectiveness. Its terms are disjointed, the interpreters are ideologically displaced, but the essence of the old position is preserved, the captive imaginary has not really been released.

Undoubtedly, it is difficult to discover in one's own mind the forces which draw it backwards. At least with time I have acquired a certain power, and if I still conceal a part of what guides my judgments, I feel less disarmed before old writings. It is useless to pretend a modesty which has no place when an author must stand aside before the questions of knowledge: the essays which I have written after I left the Trotskyist party are, in my opinion, better equipped to explain the phenomenon of bureaucracy than most of the analyses presently circulating under the label of the Revolution. What is interesting about them is that they were guided by the desire to apply to the labor movement or to the forces which claim to be part of it, the principles of analysis that Marxism had elaborated in the critique of bourgeois society. To be sure, this was not the result of an intellectual decision. It was the experience of militancy, lasting several years, that taught me to scrutinize the strange logic whereby a group (weak, numerically and, because of the inefficiency of its actions, relatively free of political and economic constraints), reintroduced the rules, practices, and interpersonal relations typical of the organizations which they wished to fight, reweaving the same kind of social fabric, cultivating the principles of fragmenting sectors of activity, segregating information, making its existence an end in itself and finally, presenting a cloudy account closed to reflection.

Such an experience indicates some of the reasons why Trotskyism, in spite of all its critiques against Communist Parties, did not really succeed in distinguishing itself from them. Although it formulated different objectives in its program and it insisted on the decisive function of mass mobilizations, the social relations that it instituted were ordered according to a similar model. This was best shown in its inability to confront the essential question of a sociological definition of Stalinism, i.e., of inquiring into its social basis. At best, Trotskyists reproduced Lenin's account of the degeneration of social democracy in terms of the emergence of a labor aristocracy. Ordinarily, they stuck to the pure and simple denunciation of leading groups judged opportunist or incompetent, and associated their prestige to the Russian revolution, in the conviction that the isolation of the socialist state left the revolutionary enterprise in shambles, thus favoring the temporary advent of a bureaucratic caste. But their failure was symbolic, for the same conceptions ultimately pervaded all the analyses of the non-

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Stalinist Marxist Left. Of course, this Left distinguished itself from the Trotskyists on many issues, beginning with their insistence on remaining in the immediate vicinity of the Communist Party. But this Left was *Trotskyist* in its ignorance, by virtue of its double conviction that party policies were explainable in terms of methodological errors or in terms of a deformed representation of the revolutionary task, and that these policies were the result of unexpected "accidents" after the October revolution, i.e., disturbances in the 'normal' development of socialism.

It is not by chance that, in a polemic with Sartre, I developed an argument which, although it was seen as "Trotskyist," was largely directed against Trotskyism. I discovered that progressives and Trotskyists could not help but meet as soon as they eliminated some social phenomena from Marx's critique. Marx had stressed the divergence between ideology and praxis. Moreover, he knew how to do a critique of economic, political, religious, or philosophical ideologies as a privileged means of unveiling contradictions operating at the level of praxis. For the progressives and Trotskyists, this route was lost as soon as what they were dealing with was no longer the bourgeois class or the Western capitalist system. They limited their critique of Communist Parties and of the social strata from which they drew their force to the level of ideas. They attacked these ideas head-on as if they were without depth, self-sufficient, and did not occlude social relations. Yet, Marx distinguished historical from sociological analysis. His study of capitalism, so rich in references to events, focused on the specific logic of a system and on the articulation of oppositions which develop once the division of capital and labor is carried out on a large scale. Aware of the need to describe the capitalists' actions, the correctives they needed, the resistances that they awakened, and thus to outline certain sequences of an empirical genesis, he nevertheless sought to decipher in apparently contingent facts the signs of a necessity which was not the conscious product of peoples' activities, but was imposed by their ignorance and often even at the cost of their immediate interests. Our epigones, on the other hand, cling to the level of historical development. When analyzing the USSR, they can only grasp the chain of events invoking the consequences of the civil war, the revolutionary defeats in Europe, or the capitalist blockade. It would have been scandalous for them to admit that the course followed by the past revolutionary regime was inevitable (a limited hypothesis having only heuristic value) and that the social system that emerged had properties which had to be studied in themselves. Furthermore, the powerlessness to detach themselves from an explanation in terms of events coincided with the powerlessness to discover, beneath the representations and institutional forms, the social relations which support them. Convinced that state ownership of the means of production and the institution of the plan were the result of the revolution, they located in them the bases of socialism without ever asking how these institutions modified the relations established

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in the process of production, their real function in the socio-economic system, and the oppositions in which they were embedded.

No doubt, we would not have been able to base the critique of workers' organizations (emerging from our experience in a small and militant party) and their concomitant mode of representation (i.e., to measure the reversal of the Marxist problematic) if we had not simultaneously learned to recognize the USSR—thanks to Castoriadis' enlightening studies of the traits of a bureaucratic capitalism. The two analyses bolstered each other. But with ideas, it is advisable to move beyond historical descriptions. What is important is that knowledge of a bureaucratic phenomenon involves reflection on the social conditions which give rise to it. As long as these conditions remained hidden and we naively accepted the norms of our milieu, we were unable to give free reign to our questions. We continue to believe that an analysis of the USSR will be fruitful only if it is connected to an analysis of the organizations of the labor movement in Western countries and of their mode of insertion in the capitalist system—just as an analysis of revolutionary undertakings at the turn of the century (in particular, Bolshevism), assumes that we examine the divorce of practice and ideology in these organizations.

However, as legitimate as it may seem, the critical movement in our earlier essays today seems to suffer from the obstinate prejudice of remaining in the strict framework of the Marxist interpretation. Fidelity turns into equivocation when it looks for pregiven answers to new questions.

Since we are only interested in fixing the stages and limits of our analysis of bureaucracy, it should be noted that it was conducted in such a way as to leave intact the image of the proletariat as a revolutionary class—as the carrier of universal historical goals. When we saw in the USSR the existence of a ruling class whose power was based on collective ownership of the means of production, believing that the whole economic system was ordered in such a way as to maintain the division between a mass of mere "doers" and a minority monopolizing managerial tasks, we assumed—without even making any explicit hypothesis—that the new class antagonism reproduced the contradiction denounced by Marx in his examination of bourgeois society. We substituted the bureaucracy for the bourgeoisie, although it had come about through a different process. At any rate, the proletariat's position remained unchanged. The only difference was that now it was in a position to discover the true nature of its goals, until then concealed under the necessity of the struggle against private property. Only now could it recognize the basis of socialism in the workers' administration of enterprises and collectivities. We imagined that in contemporary bourgeois societies the process of bureaucratization, which was becoming increasingly evident in spite of the maintenance of old forms of ownership, created for the working class an analogous consciousness of its goals—a consciousness that would not fail to operate during periods of crisis when labor organizations would be

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forced to openly uphold the capitalist system. In other words, we assumed that the world proletariat had reached a stage in which the task that Marx assigned it could be carried out. When we attacked the development of bureaucracy in the West as well as in the East, we considered the transformations in the industrial mode of production—the concentration of enterprises, the rationalization of tasks due to technological change, and the class struggle, the growing intricacy of productive and organizational functions—as affecting only the structure of the ruling class. Finally, our analysis of the genesis of bureaucracy in the organization of the working class and the institutionalization of its forms of resistance, did not challenge but, on the contrary, made even more evident, the proletariat's vocation to install a society freed from all domination. We believed that one needed a trial of alienation, even in the process of emancipation, for the critique of all alienations to be carried out.

In retrospect it seems that we lacked audacity. We were afraid to admit that the transformation of the mode of social domination could involve a profound modification of the antagonistic terms described by Marx and, consequently, would call for a revision of his model.

Even when considering the economic sphere we would have had to inquire into the changes affecting the nature of social labor. Similarly, the process of bureaucratization results in a tendency towards homogenization of models of action, social relations, and norms. Formerly this tendency was limited to workers' labor within large industry. At present this tendency has expanded to strata of technicians, planning agents, and beyond. Not only has it extended to state administrations on which the productive apparatus depends, production of services and to large scientific laboratories, but also into domains which would seem naturally not amenable to such assimilation—public health, education, juridical institutions, etc. At the same time, the relation of workers to the enterprise has been modified. This relation can no longer be encapsulated in the clauses of the contract analyzed by Marx, but has expanded to encompass a network of obligations covering the workers' social life, e.g., through institutions of social security, housing, education, and leisure. Moreover, the evolution of technology and the rationalization of tasks has the consequence of changing the proportion of skilled and unskilled labor in industry, the productive tasks in the old sense of the term, and organizational tasks. In examining these phenomena, it is futile to maintain that the proletarianization of society spreads, according to the schema outlined by Marx, for the mass of men separated from the means of production do not resemble the image that he had of them. Ultimately, those factors resulting in heterogeneity are no less powerful than the forces of resistance. In short, it is no longer possible to mix together in the same, simple social stratum the most dispossessed, the most exploited and the most frustrated in their creativity. The last are precisely those in whom the capacitiy of knowledge and of intervention in

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the milieu of labor is most stimulated by their training and the quality of their tasks. But they do not suffer the most from exploitation, which remains the lot of the factory workers, nor do they fail to benefit, sometimes substantially, from the growth of revenues. As for the most dispossessed, those who presently perform unskilled labor, they are not the most exploited in the sense that it is not from their production that capital extracts the maximum surplus value that it needs to reproduce itself. It does not follow from this that the working class has been erased: the specificity of blue collar labor remains, along with the division of manual and mental labor, in spite of modifications—especially in the latter. Nevertheless, one should not reestablish the classic antagonism between technicians and professionals, on one side, and administrators and technocrats on the other. This opposition surely exists, but it does not imply, as Marx believed, a class which is excluded from the process of socialization instituted by capitalism: a class condemned to discover itself as alien to bourgeois society, a class which is not a class, witnessing in its very existence—when it escapes the status of an economic category from which it receives its definition from outside—its vocation for communism.

With the expansion of bureaucracy, several contradictions converge: between leaders and led, between the strata which receive only scraps from economic growth and the strata which ceaselessly increase the size of their advantages, and between a minority in control of the means of knowledge and information, the production and diffusion of representations, and the masses who, in spite of their formation and their increasing importance, are deprived. In addition to these contradictions in the labor process, there is another one, which contraposes collectivities in all sectors of social life and culture against rules which determine behavior in every minor detail and plugs it into the planned circuits of giant organizations. But this opposition spreads in several directions. It mobilizes various modes of opposition. One of these takes place within the system and is the result of bureaucratic impotence to satisfy recognized needs that are even intensified by the multiplication of organizational apparatuses. Another mode of opposition translates the desire for collective control of resources while a third places the fringes of the population—essentially youth—in a position of deviance, makes them into outcasts, tends to destroy symbolic references without which the relation to reality dissolves.

In considering the ambiguous characteristics of this revolt that strikes at the very heart of the system of domination by revealing the mechanisms which guarantee the combined functioning of exploitation, oppression, and ideology while at the same time shaking up all symbolic references to socialization, we can measure the distance which separates us from the world analyzed by Marx. In this world, the proletariat was the *outsider* and at the same time the carrier of productive forces—itself being the greatest productive force. Thus, it was designated as the revolutionary class.

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Presently, the producer is not the outsider. It obtains, rather, in the rejection of the models and norms of industrial society. Strategies ordered according to realizable objectives cannot be based on conflicts between owners, means of production, and workers. Thus, it becomes impossible to make everything converge toward a single revolutionary focus to preserve the image of a society centered around the praxis of a class, to maintain, in paraphrasing Marx, that bureaucracy necessarily tends toward its own destruction by raising against itself as in a single man the mass of the dispossessed. The locations of conflicts are many and the revolutionary demand par excellence of collective self-management is gaining ground.

Undoubtedly, all of this applies primarily to Western capitalist societies, but it would be a mistake to imagine that the problems are posed in radically different terms in the popular democracies and in the USSR. Certain indications suggest that these problems are only masked by repression which comes down on any and every opposition. The force of this repression, the visible figure of power, has the effect of crystalizing revolutionary energies as soon as authority vacillates. The insurrections of East Berlin, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia provide ample evidence. Thus, one can expect in the USSR—in some unforeseeable future—a crisis of the regime, whose consequences will have an unheard of impact in Eastern Europe as well as in the Western world. But this eventuality should not lead us to forget the complexity, and indeed the heterogeneity, of conflicts at work in modern industrial society—conflicts for which only the lazy imagination of the little heirs of Leninism can delight in *foreseeing* the solution in a "good" dictatorship of the proletariat.

A study of the peculiar traits of bureaucratic regimes where nothing remains of bourgeois institutions must inquire farther than I have done in order to discover where the critique of totalitarianism leads. It will not do to refer to the logic of bureaucratic organizations, the new mechanisms whereby the state tends to penetrate all the details of the productive process, in all the representations and relations between people in civil society and culture. Nor is it sufficient to recognize in the party the opposite of what it pretends to be—the pivot of a totalitarian integration. Nor can one point to a fundamental contradiction between control and parasitism. In light of this analysis, it is advisable to carry the critique into the home ground of Marxist theory.

An examination of the Russian regime challenges nothing less than the definition of social reality and, with it, the distinction between base and superstructure. Even if one notes that social relations are generated at the level of production, and that property relations are only their juridical expression—as Castoriadis has shown—one still remains too close to the Marxist problematic. What escapes us is what distinguishes bourgoeis society from bureaucratic society. To be sure, it is possible to point to a pertinent structural trait but it should not be forgotten that it alone cannot

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characterize it. The very definition of relations of production, reduced to the opposition of means of production and labor power, remains abstract as long as it does not clarify what it deals with, as long as this relation remains purely within economic space. Rather, it must be acknowledged that it allows this space to come about, that it is at the source of a system of operations (specified in terms of production, exchange and distribution), which are in turn dependent on a specific institutional structure, where modes of power and representation are articulated according to various political and symbolic schemas. In a sense, Marx allows one to think with the concept of mode of production, of a structuring of the social field which locates various features of the economy, of the policy and of the system of representation, as well as their articulations. This structuring, however, assumes and does not generate the referents of the economy, politics, or the symbolic. Indeed, we need only consider the advent of capitalism to note the impact of extra-economic factors. Even when it is characterized by a particular order of economic operations and regulated by specific mechanisms, the logic of a social system can only be grasped by connecting the network of relations under the triple heading of production, power, and representation. Seen in this fashion, it is certainly possible to distinguish between what comes from the base and what comes from the superstructure. However, this cannot be expressed in terms of the distinction between the economic and the political. It obtains on two levels: it acts on the level of representation where the function of imagination cannot be confused with that of symbols which establish the possibility of social communication and make up the shell of the economic-political field. Otherwise, how is it possible to indicate the originality of the modern bureaucratic system? How is it possible to escape the alternative of a bad sociology which sees in it either a variation of industrial society, or a variation of an a-temporal formation such as Asiatic despotism? To move forward in the analysis, we must ask how, with the destruction of the bourgeois regime, are the articulations of a social field reproduced on all levels, how power relations, and the operations of production and representations combine according to a new model of socialization. If, unable to do so, we preserve, e.g., the classic Marxist conception of the state, or if we dismiss a priori the political or symbolic function, the traits of totalitarianism will always appear accidental.

Such an analysis would have at least one practical consequence. So long as we remain prisoner of the Marxist schema, all signs of oppression—no matter how quick we are to denounce them—turn out to have no importance. Similarly, as we have noted, democratic demands do not constitute an object for sociological interpretation, if they are seen as expressions of the influence exercised by bourgeois regimes, or a reflection of a-temporal humanist values. A new examination of the social system would have to persuade us that with democracy we are in the midst of a

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fundamental process of socialization—if we can read beyond the forms to which it is attached in bourgeois regimes.

Lastly, it was by reexamining my views concerning the degeneration of the "workers" parties and unions that I became aware of a critique too faithful to the spirit of Marx. Without doubt it is important to observe the structural homology between "revolutionary" organizations and of the organization of the industrial system that they hope to destroy. Lenin's views in *What Is to Be Done?* bears witness, in an exemplary and explicit manner, to the transfer of norms from the industrial enterprise (the militarization of labor) to the model of the party. Yet, the problem is not exhausted by invoking the alienation which leads the exploited to reproduce in their own organization the constraints that they suffer in bourgeois society—or which leads them to divest themselves of their ability to direct their emancipation after having been dispossessed of the ability to direct their production. Nor is the problem exhausted by emphasizing the role of an intelligentsia quick to transform into power the superiority that knowledge gives them. These answers are not false, but they leave in darkness the mechanisms which determine the repetition. The adherence to models of authority and hierarchy, the belief in the knowledge of the leader, the tenacious fidelity to a tradition, the attachment to symbols, the fetishism of the institution, do not point only to the inability of the working class to discover its own identity. These phenomena take on the investment of energy—both individual and collective—in the service of a socialization about which Marxists wish to know nothing, although they are actually very good at mobilizing it. Like bourgeois regimes, the bureaucratic regime would crumble if it did not nourish identifications which conceal servitude and antagonisms, and which keep the large majority under the authority of the leaders. By wanting to ignore the import of the 'imaginary,' one only exposes oneself (under the good colors of revolutionary optimism—itself mystifying and mystified) to the maintenance of an exercise in repetition. These remarks on bureaucracy are far from attaining their goal. My hope is that the reader, like myself, finds here the inspiration to continue.

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Bureaucracy, Political System, and Social Dynamic[1]

by José Baptista

The present situation of the Left in industrialized countries is, in a word, deplorable. A large part of the Left has already joined or is in the process of joining the social "establishment," and should therefore no longer be called "Left." That part of the Left further from the establishment is also in bad shape. Bound by acquired interests or by affective-ideological ties to diverse so-called socialist bureaucracies—be they moderate or extremist—it does not have a clear and consistent perspective of the contemporary social process. Consequently, its project of social transformation does not provide a truly radical alternative to the alienation structures of contemporary societies.

The most frequently heard critique of the Western Left by the Eastern (European) Left is that, "when the so-called Western Left is not shamefully collaborating with our reactionary government, at best, it is formulating the most timid critiques. In our country, your Left tends to ally itself with our conservative and reactionary right." No less frequently is the same critique of the Eastern progressivists put forth by the Western Left. The symmetry is almost perfect. Are the Stalinists correct in referring to the Eastern progressives as the "right?" Is there reason to say the same of the Western Left? Is the "iron curtain" an optical one which simply inverts political images? Do the progressives on one side become conservative or collaborationists as they cross the frontier, and vice versa? Strange optical prism! And yet, the whole world rationalizes this scandalous situation. Are we dealing with a phenomenon explainable only by lack of information?

We are faced with problems of much greater difficulty than simple questions of information. We are in the presence of the great impasse of the Left, Western as well as Eastern. Neither goes beyond partial critiques of the same reality or, rather, they criticize only some phenomenal forms of that reality. And the consequences of this fact for praxis and for correct social development are enormous.

A New Civilization

We have reached the limits of bureaucratic civilization, and capitalist civilization is in the process of coming to its own end.[2] Contrary to what

1. The present article is a condensed summary of a larger study still in preparation: *Bureaucratic Civilization and Modern Radicalism*. Translated from the French by John Ainlay and David Pugh.

2. In place of civilization we could use the phrase "social formation" or "social and economic formation." However, the term civilization conveys the idea of a more differentiated plurality of alternatives than do the terms generally used by Marx and the Marxist tradition. The term bureaucracy will be used in the broadest Weberian sense. Currently, the term

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Marx supposed, class society has demonstrated a profound ability for adaptation. While conserving its class character, it has learned how to avoid the many contradictions of capitalism. Marx believed that only soscialism could result from the crisis of capitalism. This viewpoint was the result of insufficient social development and of the relatively undeveloped condition of the social sciences. Only today can we see that the plurality of historical paths going beyond capitalist structures are only different forms of the same process: the bureaucratization of larger and larger sectors of social activity. Notwithstanding their diversity, they are socially and ontologically identical. This is not the result of chance but a response to some very determinate historical needs. In Western industrialized societies, the bureaucratic structure already dominates a fundamental part of the economic, political and cultural systems, as well as many other social activities. But its domination is not complete: it is shared with the older ruling classes. In those societies which have more or less abruptly abolished capitalism, society is controlled by an all-powerful monolithic bureaucratic system, organizing and controlling almost all of social life. This bureaucratic system can be socially and culturally differentiated. It can also be opposed to the rest of the population. In Western industrialized societies the whole bureaucratic system is generally less homogeneous, less integrated, and more differentiated. Rather, it is composed of many relatively autonomous centers, and it only controls part of society. That part, if it is not relatively extensive, is in any case decisive.[3]

It is apparently strange that there are very few analyses of the bureaucratic process by leftist thinkers. (To name only a few: Max Weber, Bruno Rizzi, Georges Gurvitch, Claude Lefort, Andras Hegedüs, Alain Touraine, John K. Galbraith, Marc Paillet, etc.) This phenomenon is entirely comprehensible if limited to the bureaucratic Left, i.e., the Left of large bureaucratic organizations (political parties, unions, States, etc.). However, insofar as it also involves the independent Left, the phenomenon is much more difficult to understand. Three factors would appear to explain it. First, the ideological influence of the powerful bureaucratic Left. Second, Leftist

bureaucracy is used with a variety of meanings in the social sciences. By Bureaucracy I mean an impersonal structure which is integrated in a more or less continuous manner and which is capable of this integrative function only in the current stage of complex industrial societies. (People in contemporary social science also use the terms technocracy, technostructure and techno-bureaucracy in a similar sense.) Its more modern form succeeds, historically, the capitalist structure of social integration (repression and management). In this article I will not be particularly concerned with bureaucracies in Third World countries.

3. According to Galbraith, today the bureaucratic system dominates the highest levels of the economy in industrial countries, including the most powerful and most technically modern corporations. Their contribution to the Gross National Product would be about 40%. Hence, the administration of these huge corporations, so essential to modern production, would simply be impossible without bureaucratic structures. Moreover, without this enormous bureaucratic apparatus, which is the basic condition of industrial societies, neither the economy nor society would be able to function. Not as critical, but still important, are organizations such as political parties, unions, universities, etc.

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conservatism, i.e., the fear of the violent upsetting of the old truths, beliefs, attitudes, conduct. (These, however, have so remote an influence as to be negligible.) Yet, the bureaucratization of a very important part of what is usually called "the Left," is obvious. The implication of the old truths of the radicalism of the last century could lead to a terrifying void difficult to be quickly filled. Sticking with old truths is much more comfortable than to confront new realities. The third factor is that, mainly after the last war, on account of Burnham and Michels, two thinkers who became very reactionary, the theory of bureaucracy (the macro-theory) became associated with reactionary ideologies. It should be emphasized that for a long time the Weberian theory remained largely unknown, and that even where it has experienced a large rebirth, e.g., the U.S., its interpretation by empiricists, social-technicians, and micro-sociologists has profoundly deformed it. Thus, badly understood and adapted to old dogmas (C.W. Mills), the (macro-) theory of bureaucracy was generally rejected by the Left, even by those free from biases.

Bureaucratic structures were not born with industry; only their most modern and rational forms were. Bureaucratic structures transcend industrial society. After having developed bourgeois structures, the industrial revolution did nothing but establish in increasingly broader sectors of human activity a structure as old as history itself. Human societies followed a plurality of paths towards class society. One of these paths, which is not any less important than the others, was that of the incomparably large empires of antiquity. After all, Marx was one of the nineteenth-century thinkers who paid much attention to this type of society: the so-called "Asiatic mode of production" or "Asiatic society." In the large ancient empires, such as those of China, India, Egypt, Persia, etc., the dominant social system was bureaucratic. Ferenc Tökei calls these societies "bureaucratic patriarchies"[4] and claims that it was a matter of classes ruled by a dominant class: the bureaucracy.[5] Occasionally in history one encounters societies where bureaucratic structures were almost absent, e.g., in the golden age of the Greek city-states or in early European feudalism. In other societies bureaucratic structures were mainly developed in the state sector and had few administrative functions in the productive sector, e.g., the Roman Empire. After the disappearance of the Roman Empire, only the English preserved bureaucratic structures in Western Europe: England furnished the ideological cement for the loose conglomerates of early feudalism. Later, the struggle for political centralization became the struggle for bureaucratization of certain social functions exercised by the nobles. The centralizing forces tried to develop a powerful State with the

4. Ferenc Tökei, *Sur le Mode de Production Asiatique* (Akadémiai Kiado: Budapest, 1966), p. 19. Naturally, he adds that these societies have nothing to do with Eastern Europe.

5. Wittfogel and Eisenstadt have described in detail these ancient societies. See S.N. Eisenstadt, *The Political Systems of Empires* (Free Press: Glencoe, Ill., 1963), and K. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism* (London, 1957).

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monopoly of certain administrative, juridical, military, and fiscal functions. Bourgeois society required that these functions should not remain the private property of anyone, neither noble nor even bourgeois. The development of merchant and monetary relations demanded that these functions be bureaucratized. At the same time, these relations became the foundation for a consolidated and stable bureaucratic apparatus, to the extent that through fiscal revenues, the apparatus was able to pay its functionaries in money. Up to that point functionaries could be paid only with natural sources of revenue, usually land. That system rendered functionaries progressively more autonomous from the centers of authority and generally produced new feudal revenue. Thus, the endowments grew progressively hereditary and privately owned. In Continental Europe the struggle was between centralizing forces and centrifugal forces. This led to a hypertrophy of statist bureaucracy in Absolutist States. With the rise of the bourgeoisie, however, the bureaucracy experienced a relative decadence. The bourgeoisie required a bureaucratic state, but a state which only acts as the guardian of the activities of expanding capitalism. Capitalist society and the bureaucratic state must coexist since capitalist society cannot coexist with a state owned by a few individuals, even if they are members of the ruling class. A privatized state, as in feudalism, cannot guarantee bourgeois "equality," a requirement of a capitalist economy which transcends classes and particular interests in civilized society, even if they are bourgeois. The state must be separated from "civil society" and "private life." It represents the "universal interest" par excellence (Hegel) in opposition to the arbitrariness of the private sphere. The coexistence of bourgeois society and the state bureaucratic structure is at the very foundation of capitalist society. Yet, the two structures must not overstep their boundaries. Civilians cannot hold a public function as private property, nor can the State expropriate a civil function. Capitalist society as depicted in the ideology of expanding capitalism and economic liberalism must strictly separate the public sphere of the state from the private civilian sphere. This is not only bourgeois ideology, but it is also shared by the State in bourgeois society and the bureaucracy in the capitalist state. This bureaucracy was still relatively underdeveloped in early bourgeois society. It is still often "bureaucratic" (in the pejorative sense of the term), i.e., replete with dysfunctions (R. Merton), gravely suffering from organizational disorders such as red tape, and a whole series of Kafkaesque castles. In expanding capitalist society, it is still incapable of organizing the private sphere, which is much more efficient in the capitalists' hands. The forces of production still require only relatively small productive units, where individuals do not need an administrative apparatus and material motivation leads to an amazing economic creativity and hitherto inconceivable performances. In "pure" nineteenth-century bourgeois society the ideologies proposing to replace capitalist administration with a "deprivatized," "decapitalized," "social" management are

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much too radical for bourgeois society, and for its state bureaucracy. These ideologies were profoundly anti-bourgeois and revolutionary.

Early ideologies proclaiming the organization of essential social activity according to non-bourgeois structures (naturally, as in all revolutionary movements, these structures were viewed in poignantly egalitarian and libertarian colors) were such a break with bourgeois thought that most of their exponents repudiated bourgeois values. Thus, it should not be surprising that historically the revolutionary bureaucracy aspiring to monopolistic social domination was initially associated—and remained associated for a rather long time—with the radical classes most opposed to the bourgeois status quo, e.g., the working class.

What is the social origin of the bureaucratic structure? Very briefly, it can be said that dichotomous or class[6] societies involving vast human masses can be effectively controlled only by a highly integrated management apparatus. Other types of administrative structures either do not control effectively or do not control at all. A complex, extensive, and highly integrated administration implies a hierarchy whose main criterion of structuration is the possession of specialized administrative knowledge and not things such as private property.[7] Thus, the functionaries of such an administrative apparatus must be separated from the means of production, administration, etc. They must be chosen according to a criterion approaching bureaucratic rationality and must submit to tyrannical discipline from above.

By *dichotomous society* I mean a social whole with a division of labor separating those who decide and are trained to decide and those who execute and cannot for that reason take an active role in the decision-making process concerning the general orientation of social development. This is characteristic of a determinate period of development of the productive forces, in which a considerable part of society can be freed from the production of the means of subsistence. This part of society takes advantage of it to monopolistically control the social process and impose

6. One can use the term social class, in the Marxian sense, as an essential category for the analysis of social change within the framework of bureaucratic societies. In the Marxian conception of social structure, private property is social power and the determining factor in social structure, not the reification of it. It is not very difficult to demonstrate that Marx's concept of class society is tied to the division of labor. This is why we are using the notion of dichotomous society rather than the notion of private property. However, we could point to a difference between the notion of a dichotomized society and a class-based society. The latter would be the general though not necessary result of the former. Theoretically, at least—and this is important for an anti-dichotomic praxis—we can conceive of a dichotomized society which, through a permanent revolutionary process, tries to avoid transforming itself into a class-based society during the slow and difficult process of liberation. I would even say that this is one of the key problems for modern radical praxis, especially when the latter is bent on having a determining role in political power.

7. In some pre-modern bureaucracies there were mechanisms for the private ownership of of some offices—for example, in European states before bourgeois revolutions. Bureaucratic irrationality (the office-holder was relatively free of the lines of authority) produced these mechanisms which were often quite adequate to interests other than those of the bureaucracy taken as a whole.

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social relations advantageous to its particular interests. This period will end when the productive forces have reached such a state that it should become materially possible for the large majority of the population to *take part in, and effectively direct*, the decision-making process: i.e., when this dichotomy is avoided. *The bureaucratic structure is the most developed dichotomous structure and is the only one capable of managing a very complex and differentiated dichotomous structure.* In comparison to capitalism, the *modern* bureaucratic structure constitutes a more advanced step in social development. Thus, *bureaucratic civilization is an advance over capitalist civilization.* It is the most advanced stage known to dichotomous civilization, capitalism being the most advanced stage of privatized civilization, i.e., those societies with an atomized and personalized social structure where private property has a determining role. On the other hand, bureaucratic civilization is characterized by an integrated and depersonalized social structure (the criterion of structuration being less bound to persons and their reified relations *vis-à-vis* positions in the social structure, and more bound to an impersonal system of strict regulations connected with specialized knowledge, and individual competence. It must be noted that the more developed the productive forces at a certain historical stage, the more alternatives exist in social development. The paths from capitalist civilization to bureaucratic civilization are many. Here, we are concerned with only two: the path inaugurated by the October Revolution which today is that of the majority of industrialized Eastern European countries (the socialist-bureaucratic course); and the path of present-day Western industrialized countries (the capitalist-bureaucratic course).

The Capitalist-Bureaucratic Course

Marx and Engels anticipated this course when they examined the large economic organizations of their period: the corporations. Let us recall a few of their remarks: "It has already been remarked by Mr. Ure that it is not the industrial capitalists, but the industrial managers who are 'the soul of our industrial system'... The capitalist mode of production has brought matters to a point where the work of supervision, entirely divorced from the ownership of capital, is always obtainable. It has therefore come to be useless for the capitalist to perform it himself. An orchestra conductor need not own the instruments of his orchestra... Cooperative factories furnish proof that the capitalist has become no less redundant as a functionary in production as he himself, looking down from his perch, finds the big landowner redundant." Marx even writes on "the development of a large class of industrial and commercial managers."[8] One could still add some pages on the birth of a new social structure which, while transitory in dialectically negating the capitalist structure, is not designated without ambiguity by

8. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III (Moscow, 1962), p. 379.

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Marx as a socialist structure. But bureaucratic structures were still too underdeveloped to be theoretically systematized by Marx. Furthermore, since that would invalidate a part of Marx's theory, especially concerning the consequences of the claim that socialist society would follow capitalist society, we may suspect that once reality no longer supported the claim, these disquieting phenomena were consciously or unconsciously overlooked and not further analyzed by Marx.

The fact is that large economic organizations (what Lenin called monopolies) required a bureaucratic structure. These large economic organizations have rendered obsolete a market regulated by generally self-regulating mechanisms. Thus, it became necessary to have a bureaucratized market submissive to a strict statist regulation (planning, if one wishes). That gave a decisive impulse to enormously developed state bureaucratic systems which are the otherness of economic bureaucracies.[9] As the complexity grew, industrial societies demanded vast bureaucratically managed organizations at nearly all levels. Thus, Western capitalist societies were progressively bureaucratized, and the old ruling classes were either retired (with fairly generous pensions) or progressively merged with the ascending bureaucracies.

The main feature of the capitalist-bureaucratic course is a progressive evolution from capitalism to bureaucratic society without great revolutionary transitions. Confronted with movements more populist and revolutionary than the bureaucracy, the bourgeoisie of countries associated with the capitalist-bureaucratic course allied itself with part of the bureaucracy: *the established bureaucracy*. These two groups have succeeded in being dynamic by avoiding brutal ruptures, while profoundly modifying dichotomous society. A very different process took place with the socialist-bureaucratic course.

The Socialist-Bureaucratic Course

If the labor movement is considered a movement of resistance of workers against the ruling classes, and if the revolutionary bureaucratic movement is considered as the socio-historical movement of the bureaucracy which has made a revolutionary break with capitalist society, then it can be claimed that there has been such a symbiosis between the labor movement and revolutionary bureaucratic movement that it is impossible to distinguish the two. The revolutionary bureaucracy showed a remarkable tendency in appropriating the labor movement, especially when the latter became large and powerful and it needed a large organization which could be effective only if it constructed an apparatus of specialized direction, and

9. In this regard see the excellent analyses by J.K. Galbraith, especially *The New Industrial State*. For the best analysis of the U.S.A. regarding the separation of ownership and administration, and the bureaucratization of the latter, see Robert Aaron Gordon's *Business Leadership in the Large Corporation* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1961).

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"professional revolutionaries" monopolized decision-making power and knowledge. This is necessary given the dichotomous character of the society in which the movement obtains, and given the need for efficiency in the face of the organizational efficiency of established power in its repression. [10] Ultimately, the social dichotomy itself forces large labor organizations to take on a bureaucratic structure which allows them to be taken over by the revolutionary bureaucratic movement. This appropriation can take many forms, with ideologies often called Marxist but increasingly more adapted to the particular interests of the apparatus of "professional revolutionaries." *The great tragedy of the labor movement up to today has been that it has always been faced with a dilemma:* the "libertarian" path which refuses bureaucratic organizations and is doomed to failure because of inefficiency, or the "authoritarian" path, which allows the development of effective organizations with which to fight the political enemy, but leads to the appropriation of the labor movement by the bureaucratic movement. *This was the great dilemma of nineteenth-century socialism and is still with us today when it can finally be resolved in the most industrially advanced and politically pluralist societies.*

The bureaucratization of the labor movement and the bureaucratization of the USSR do not represent betrayals, incompetence or accidents. The Russian Revolution was not betrayed, as is claimed by many of its critics: it did not deviate because of the difficult situation created by encirclement and by international tensions. Soviet society became a class-society because it did not know how, nor did it wish to, attack its own dichotomy. Furthermore, several alternative socialist-bureaucratic courses were possible. Yet, it is difficult to see how the young Soviet republic might have avoided bureaucratic civilization. The likelihood of bureaucratization in Soviet society was overwhelming.

The Stalinist Alternative: Totalitarian Absolutism

Many explanations have been given of Stalinism, and they all contribute something to the understanding of this complex phenomenon. Most of these explanations, however, do not consider the concrete social structure of Soviet society. Only rarely is the Stalinist phenomenon approached in a way close to Marx. This is largely due to the value-systems which are at the base of these explanations: either they are not Left, or else they are bound to bureaucratic interests. When they try to be radical, they are often under the influence of bureaucratic ideology or otherwise suffer from leftist conservatism. Therefore, *only a system of radical anti-bureaucratic and not just*

10. One book dealing with the question of the bureaucratization of labor organizations remains significant even though it suffers from a strong determinism which can easily lead to a reactionary positivism is Robert Michels', *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy* (Free Press: New York, 1962), originally published in German in 1911 under the title *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modern Demokratie.*

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anti-capitalist values can carry out an objective analysis of the bureaucratic phenomenon. By employing a Marxian approach, it will free itself from bureaucratic Marxism and from the use of a conceptual system that Marx created to analyze a very different reality.

Today we still lack a satisfactory radical theory of Stalinism, although there have already been several important contributions such as Lefort's. [11] His work can be generally summarized as follows: the main feature of the Stalinist phenomenon was that of a new ruling class which came into being from almost nothing. Thus, given the very antagonistic relations between Bolsheviks and the ruling classes, and the purge of most radical and revolutionary Bolshevik cadres shortly after the revolution, Soviet society found itself short of professional specialists able to run society. Considering that the party leaders had little experience in running a new type of problem-ridden society which was becoming highly concentrated and centralized and, therefore, much more complex, it is easy to imagine the great difficulties facing its first managers. These difficulties were added onto the familiar burdens of imperialist aggression, internal opposition, war devastation, general economic and cultural underdevelopment, an ideology of "dictatorship of the proletariat" which had never considered that the managers of party as well as of a State or of any other organization are no longer proletarians and quickly acquire particular interests so that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in a society which is not free of the dichotomy is an absurd idea, etc. A new ruling class in the process of constituting itself still bound to revolutionary values and workers' interests which are rapidly becoming particularized (although it is still commited to bureaucratic and workers' interests) certainly tends toward totalitarian absolutism. Considering that all revolutions have been generally followed by absolutist periods and that the classes which have led them were much more experienced in running society with their members, then it is not difficult to understand that the birth of the new bureaucratic class in Russia had to take on an extremely absolutist form.

Thus, the following points are necessary for a radical theory of the Stalinist phenomenon: the self-creation of a new ruling class in particularly difficult historical circumstances (which are especially important since they relate to the concrete element needed to bring about a social structure), in addition to things such as the leaders' personalities which in certain periods can have a considerable influence.

Some Social Functions of Pluralism, Absolutism, and Totalitarianism

A close examination of political systems (the systems of power-relations organized in the state) allows us to distinguish two types of systems: pluralist or multicentered systems, in which many political institutions have a relatively high degree of autonomy; and absolutist or "unicentered" systems

11. Claude Lefort, *Eléments pour une Critique de la Bureaucratie* (Genève, 1972).

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(also called authoritarian or monolithic systems) in which political institutions have very limited autonomy. Strictly speaking, totalitarianism is not a political system (although political sociology or political science usually considers it as such). Totalitarianism goes beyond the political sphere: it reaches almost every social sub-system and engulfs the whole of society. A pluralist political system is possible in a totalitarian society. The authority [*Herrschaft*] of the dominant elite can be so effective that, even if autonomous political institutions are possible, society is so integrated that it ultimately prevents autonomous political centers representing alternative types of social development. The United States has been and remains a prime example of a society with such powerful totalitarian tendencies. An absolutist political system, as can be found in Spain, and earlier in Portugal and Greece, is not comparable to a totalitarian society: the center controls only some of the social activities.

These three models of power have very different socio-historical functions depending on circumstances. They can be agents of *a profound social dynamism* as well as of *permanent reaction* or of relative social stagnation. They cannot be studied independently of the societies and circumstances in which the exist. None of these models has always positive or negative influences on social dynamics.

In our century, totalitarian absolutism has been extremely dynamic where it has been a matter of rapidly transforming the social structure of economically underdeveloped traditional societies which have usually been dominated by imperialist exploitation: e.g., Third World countries which have had to free themselves from imperialism and bring about rapid economic and social transformation. Exploited by industrial imperialism, unable to break the so-called "infernal circle of underdevelopment," and dominated by a ruling compredores class, Third World countries today do not seem to have any options other than those of bureaucratic revolutions offering absolutist and totalitarian models to guide economic and social development. Unfortunately, as the recent case of Chile seems to indicate, a pluralist course is not possible, even if desirable. China seems engaged in an interesting experiment: periodic revolts where a political plurality suddenly seeks to correct many of the evils of totalitarian absolutism.[12] However, a great danger menaces this grand experiment in the future: the institutionalization and ritualization of revolt could easily lead to its instrumen-

12. During the cultural revolution people believed that the essential goal was to combat the cultural consequences of the dichotomic division of labor. That is to say, given a level of insufficient development of productive forces, once the dichotomy was abolished people could at least attempt to curb the process of social differentiation between the groups through a permanent cultural revolution (or periodically permanent), i.e., to thwart the formation of a "class-for-itself." The cultural revolution apparently even attempted to confront the dichotomy (administrator participation in manual labor and worker participation in administration) at its roots, trying to limit the formation of a "class-in-itself." However, especially after the mysterious disappearance of Lin Piao, information reaching Europe indicates that the consequences of the dichotomy threaten the efforts of the cultural revolution.

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talization by the ruling group. In any case, the pluralist orgy which was the Cultural Revolution could be one of the forms with which to counterbalance the misdeeds of totalitarian absolutism. In the industrialized countries, however, it is difficult to imagine a dynamic function for totalitarian absolutism.

Totalitarian Absolutism in the Socialist-Bureaucratic Course: From Dynamism to Permanent Reaction

In the young Soviet republic totalitarian absolutism had a role similar to the one it has in Third World countries—although some of its extreme forms of terrorism were often superfluous. To the extent that the bureaucracy directed a process of economic and social development, absolutist totalitarianism was largely inevitable, if we consider the alternatives open to the socialist-bureaucratic course in such a socio-historical context. Insofar as the bureaucracy was the preferable alternative of social development, for the Soviet people it remained the dynamic force which could raise society to a stage where other alternatives of development would be possible.

What must be emphasized is that in the world historical context of the first few decades of the new society, the socialist-bureaucratic course could not have avoided the misery of totalitarian absolutism—even if carried out according to different, more or less extremist, alternatives.

Yet, the outline of a radical anti-bureaucratic alternative of social development had been put forth during the first years of the revolution: it was the alternative of the anarchists and of the "workers' opposition." Being more radical, however, this outline of a developmental alternative was very sketchy. This radical movement has not degenerated into dichotomous social movements as often as movements drawing their inspiration from Marx's doctrine. Yet, as in anarchism in general, it exhibited a serious pragmatic defect resulting from its radicalism: in rejecting bureaucratic structures,[13] it deprived itself of that great organizational weapon. In a dichotomous world organized by bureaucratic power structures, any movement without the bureaucratic organizational weapon is condemned to inefficiency. This is all the more true today in pluralist and advanced societies. Historically, in refusing to be instrumentalized by the bureaucracy (this is their great virtue), anarchists and "libertarian communists" have

13. Note that in response to the "nationalization of the trade-unions" alternative advocated by Trotsky at that time—the most bureaucratic alternative, which Stalin chose (not to confuse the early and later Trotsky!)—the "workers' opposition" advocated "State unionization." Even if this position was in that context extremely anti-bureaucratic, considering the much wider functions these unions would have had compared to normal unions, they probably would have bureaucratized themselves eventually, since any union of size wants to be efficient. Regardless, this unionization of social life could have begun a relatively efficient, growing institutionalization of worker control *vis-à-vis* national and economic bureaucracies. What would have happened to workers' control of their own union bureaucracies remains an open question.

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been condemned by that fact to capitulate to "authoritarian communists" (owing to the highly dichotomized society in which these movements obtain. In the young Soviet republic an anarchist alternative had little chance of survival: either it bureaucratized or it would have led to the victory of reaction.[14]

Thus, although an anti-bureaucratic and anti-dichotomous course was possible in post-capitalist Russia, from an historically concrete viewpoint those who could have developed that alternative were too weak. In 1920 Russia the only viable courses of action were the socialist-bureaucratic course (representing the most dynamic solution) and the bourgeois course (much less dynamic). With the exception of a miraculous bourgeois course, of the Japanese variety, the capitalist-bureaucratic path was not the most dynamic. Although not absolutely impossible, this alternative bourgeois course had very little chance of success: the socialist-bureaucratic course was definitely the more dynamic of the two.[15]

There is a broad consensus among the Western European Left (not so much in the Eastern Left) that the socialist-bureaucratic course was more dynamic than the capitalist-bureaucratic course for the USSR. But can we still say the same today? Is the historical result of the socialist-bureaucratic course still more dynamic than the result of the capitalist-bureaucratic course? Can the USSR and the Warsaw Pact countries today be considered more dynamic (economically as well as socially) than the societies of industrialized countries which historically chose the capitalist-bureaucratic course? Is totalitarian absolutism as dynamic as pluralism (occasionally quasi-totalitarian) for industrial societies? What are the comparative conditions of dynamism of these two groups of societies?

Most Western leftists today claim that, in spite of its aberrations, the Warsaw Pact countries are quasi-socialist. The more radical Western leftists, the theorists of "State Capitalism," refuse to consider these countries even quasi-socialist. Generally, they do not reject bureaucratic civilization itself, but only one or several of its phenomenal forms. Notwithstanding their apparent radicalism, they have yet to completely disengage themselves from the bureaucratic enterprise: they lack a radical analysis of bureaucratic civilization. They prefer to consider that part of bureaucratic civilization that they dislike as capitalist, and that part that they like as socialist or

14. This does not mean that an efficient anti-bureaucratic alternative was impossible. The bureaucratic phenomenon was already (relatively) well-known elsewhere during that period, through the works of Robert Michels, Max Weber and Rosa Luxemburg. The latter, in fact, sought to develop this issue for the anti-classist movement (aware of the danger of being engulfed by the bureaucracy and of the pragmatic dead end in the mechanical rejection of all bureaucratic structure). Unfortunately, after the brutal interruption of her life, there has been very little work on the subject. Today, however, the topic of bureaucracy is very much on the agenda. Generally, most of these discussions revolve around the classic debate between "authoritarians" and "spontaneists."

15. I speak only of the USSR. The case of the European "popular democracies" is generally very different. It is even more than different: it is often the opposite.

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quasi-socialist. Now, the inability to radically criticize bureaucratic civilization in its totality is the cause of the inability to really challenge dichotomous or class civilization. This inability translates into an apology of part of bureaucratic civilization (which sooner or later leads to conservatism), and a reformist practice *vis-à-vis* capitalist societies (which are often quasi-bureaucratic societies and, occasionally, even totally bureaucratic). Thus, the objective is to *actually transform a partially bureaucratic society into a fully bureaucratic one, or else, to substitute for the bureaucratic elite in power, another bureaucratic elite.* Sometimes this takes the form of the substitution of bureaucrats by workers who afterwards become bureaucrats. We should emphasize here that in concrete situations it is not irrelevant which type of bureaucratic elite is in power: some are very dynamic, some are very populist, and some are very reactionary.

Both conceptions which deny the quasi-bureaucratic character of capitalist-bureaucratic societies and the bureaucratic character of socialist-bureaucratic societies, while affirming their capitalist character, do not go beyond reformism—even if they are very extremist and apparently radical. It remains that even the most extreme conceptions often fail to formulate radical critiques of bureaucratic civilization.

Once we accept the identical ontological character of contemporary industrial societies, nothing prevents us from discarding the old dogma according to which a group of these societies is necessarily and essentially more dynamic than the other group. This dogma is often encapsulated in slogans such as: "the worst socialism is always better than the best capitalism." From our viewpoint what this means is that the worst socialist-bureaucratic societies are always preferable to the best capitalist-bureaucratic societies. This dogma rests on the ontological differentiation between these two groups of societies. Once this dogma is discarded, we must undertake a concrete comparative analysis of the social dynamism of these two groups of societies. We have already seen that initially the Soviet socialist-bureaucracy had a dynamic historical role—even if with extremely high human, social, and economic costs. After it became consolidated, however, this socialist-bureaucracy became more and more conservative and reactionary. Let us closely examine several aspects of this loss of dynamism.

Economics and the Repression of Pluralization. Tendencies in Socialist-bureaucratic Societies

Undoubtedly, the most striking phenomenon of recent years has been the vacillating growth-trends which were, until the sixties, the pride of the dominant elite in European socialist-bureaucratic societies. The causes of this phenomenon were sought solely within the economic system, by the same economists who were recommending the economic reforms of the sixties. Although these economists did locate many of the obstacles which curbed the economy's productive-bureaucratic efficiency, they nevertheless

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did not know or were unable to come up with an analysis working with more than a few factors. Specifically, they failed to integrate into their conception many important factors. Thus, in their discussion of mercantile and monetary relations in socialist-bureaucratic societies, they—including Charles Bettelheim—ultimately neglected the most important social factor: the dichotomized and class-based character of these societies. They focused on certain important technical factors such as the shift from extensive to intensive growth,[16] thus reducing the problem solely to this process. They did not emphasize the whole: i.e., apart from the growth complexity of the economic process, the old system was seen as a stage where the new ruling class was conscious of its under-developed administrative capacity, e.g., motivational systems, etc., and consequently it had to be strictly supervised and directed by this ruling elite or, to be more precise, by this dominant clique. Even a highly positivst sociology of organization can easily reach the following empirical conclusion: a more or less comprehensive organization, with an incompetent bureaucratic administration and an underdeveloped motivational system (in proportion to the administrative needs of the organization), requires a sufficient synthesis of concentrated and centralized authority in order to maximize its efficiency. In order to decentralize, the individuals in the system must possess the technical competence and, simultaneously, identify with the goals of the organization. That is to say, they must have a motivational system adequate to the needs of the system's administrators (H. Simon). Otherwise, decentralized incompetence produces chaos and an uncontrolled motivational system produces generalized corruption. If the economic process of extensive growth is less complex and requires less developed bureaucracies than the process of intensive growth, then the ontological explanation of over-concentration and over-centralization during the Stalinist period involves a very favorable circumstance. A great deal of extensive growth has been brought about by a highly fragmented, localized and decentralized managerial class, e.g., as in the U.S. The socialist-bureaucratic economic system does not automatically require over-centralization for a process of extensive growth. That is required only when the present system has serious rupture with the prior status quo: structurally, this was required because the new system was endowed with a very undeveloped ruling class, which is to say, a numerically small ruling class with insufficient specialized knowledge and a rudimentary motivational system. The circumstances of extensive growth and urgent social goals [17]

16. Extensive growth is obtained by a quantitative increase of productive factors when productivity is constant. Intensive growth is obtained when labor strength is constant and productivity increases. See the works of Ota Sik and Wlordimerz Brus, among others.

17. Given existing data, with a constant quantity of professional mangers possessing a constant degree of specialized knowledge, an increase in decentralization can occur only (assuming that these knowledge specialists were optimally utilized) by an increase in the participation of the masses in management conjunctive with a policy of motivation directed at both the masses and specialists, as in the case of the Chinese cultural revolution.

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favored this over-centralization. Moreover, the structural causes at the base of an absolutist-totalitarian political system are the same for an over-centralized economic system. This holds true for the cultural system as well.

The social structure requires over-centralization at a certain point in time. Later, it requires the contrary, and, we are told, the cause resides in the shift from extensive to intensive growth. This shift, however, has *favored* rather than *caused* economic decentralization. More essential is the *need for pluralization by a ruling class which, under-developed as it was, became a developed ruling class,* i.e., an under-developed bureaucracy, in order to reach a minimum of efficiency, must rationalize its structure by creating an over-centralized system of authority. On the other hand, with the social development of this bureaucracy, the over-centralized system becomes a serious obstacle to bureaucratic rationality and efficiency. Why? If a developed bureaucracy is not decentralized there is the danger of serious corruption or systematically irrational bureaucratic decisions. Moreover, a developed bureaucracy has a minimal identification with the values of the bureaucratic class and the values of particular organizations. An overly centralized structure prevents bureaucratic creativity and it curbs an identification with ever more pressing bureaucratic goals—it produces *generalized bureaucratic frustration.* This results in anomalies and serious bureaucratic "dysfunctions" (R.K. Merton), independently of extensive or intensive economic growth. However, the shift to intensive growth does create a need for social pluralization. In effect, the management of the whole society becomes increasingly more complex and, with this growing complexity, it becomes technically impossible to make an increasingly larger number of decisions at the highest level. Even if the managers and the technical revolution of information processing generally allow a certain centralization of decisions, these conditions cannot preserve the old system of authority. Moreover, it is not a question of technical limits: in becoming a fully developed class, and thus differentiated, the very same socialist bureaucracy no longer wants an arbitrary system of distribution of authority which subjects them to the whims of a small ruling clique. *As each ruling class matures, the socialist bureaucracy seeks to participate in the administrative decision-making process of the whole society and prevent this process from being monopolized by a clique that it has not chosen.* In the more dynamic sectors of socialist-bureaucratic societies there is a rising echo of pluralist theories. In industrialized Western countries participation was established in the heart of the administrative structure of organization, rather than, e.g., within the working class. The same can be said for the political system: only different organizations such as political parties, unions, associations, etc., participate, and not the *powerless,* i.e., workers and intellectuals who have no organizational authority. In the last analysis, *the ideology of participation is the ideology of a vast, differentiated bureaucracy which, like all developed ruling classes, wants to participate in the direction of social*

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development. For the powerless mass, participation involves, *at most*, only irrelevant details, operationalizing those general decisions made exclusively by the central bureaucracies.

Because of its complex structure, the technologically high level of advanced industrial societies requires a limited distribution of authority in large organizations. Especially at the level of administration, it becomes necessary to increase participation in the operational decision-making process in order to respond to an extremely large and complex system. This increased participation reinforces the identification of the participants with the organization's values. Thus, it has a positive effect on the bureaucratic efficiency of this diffused authority. This also has some "pluralistic" consequences. As the motivational systems of increasingly larger social groups are adapted to the organization's needs, an ideological and motivational totalitarianism evolves as a cementing force, substituting for the decrease of centralization. As such, the general tendency of the authority system in the most developed bureaucracies appears as a gentle totalitarianism, operating through psychological and ideological manipulations with a minimum of strict surveillance and rules. This is a long way from the authority system of more rudimentary bureaucracies, such as socialist-bureaucracies in general, or bureaucracies in under-developed countries and the less dynamic sectors of developed countries. The same can be said for the bureaucracy studied by Max Weber whose characteristics so many authors insist on mechanically transposing to micro-studies of contemporary societies.[18]

Let us return to East European societies. There, tendencies towards pluralization are usually subject to severe repression. *The lack of pluralization is actually the most important immediate brake to the quantitative and qualitative dynamic of the economy and of society as a whole.*

Experience has shown that projects of reform which have been formulated everywhere in East Europe and aimed toward economic pluralization, have been consciously thwarted. All reform projects almost exclusively stressed quantitative growth. Without pursuing this matter further, we can roughly say that these projects were conducive to quantitative growth which was increasingly hindered by the old economic systems. In Czechoslovakia and Hungary the economic reform projects went further than in any of the other Warsaw Pact countries. We all know the violent end of the former, while in the latter, it has been quietly shoved aside. Yet, *qualitative* reforms failed even more miserably than even the quantitative ones.

Socialist-bureaucratic totalitarian absolutism manifests itself formally in cultural life through a fairly strict control of mass communication and

18. Also note that the whole participatory atmosphere in ultra-modern education, described so well by David Reisman in *The Lonely Crowd* without, however, concerning himself with the basic social reasons, is only a response to the general process of the diffusion of authority, characteristic of the most advanced contemporary bureaucratic structures.

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partially even informal individual communication. The ruling conceptions in the cultural policy deals with all conceptions which do not flow from the official ideology as if they were enemies. Hence, it becomes very difficult or impossible to characterize the process of "social self-knowledge" (*"auto-connaissance de la société"*—Andras Hegedüs) as sufficiently objective. Even in pluralist industrial societies, where culture is not strictly controlled by the need for apology,[19] this process of self-knowledge runs into many obstacles, since social knowledge deals with many interests. Thus, it becomes prejudiced since the duly constituted powers finance some approaches and oppose others. Moreover, everything being the same, it generally lags behind the social process. This is largely due to the very complexity of social phenomena and to the current state of social science which does not yet understand the complex and rapidly changing social reality. To say that the process of social self-knowledge is extremely deficient in a totalitarian-absolutist cultural system concerned with social apologetics is to belabor the obvious.

Bureaucratic efficiency, however, suffers when it lacks objective social information. In capitalist-bureaucratic societies an effective bureaucracy is maintained by providing the objective information needed for efficient decisions. In bureaucratic civilization, not only is pluralism required by the economic system in order to attain bureaucratic efficiency, but the same is the case in the cultural system, where the means for efficient decisions, objective information, must be available. This is true for the economy as well as all other social activities. Cultural paralysis affects the system's decision-makers both directly and indirectly. The social sciences, which are not only stifled but are also denied objective information concerning social and political life in general, are unable to provide either adequate knowledge of social phenomena or a *technology of the social process*—or technology to change society according to bureaucratic rationality.

We have come to some of the negative consequences for bureaucratic efficiency resulting from the absence of bureaucratic pluralism. These consequences can be expressed as follows: *Pluralism is a condition for efficiency in the administration of industrial society.* Or, more concretely, *today, socialist-bureaucratic industrial societies are unable to reach the level of social administrative efficiency of Western societies, in spite of the fact that they have many institutions which are much more bureaucratically rational in comparison with those of Western industrial societies.* These

19. In socialist-bureaucratic countries, control of the social sciences is administrative and direct. In capitalist-bureaucratic countries control is indirect, usually through the market-place. In the former, intellectuals are relatively independent of the market-place but very dependent on the central bureaucracy; in the latter, they are relatively independent of direct administrative control or censure, but very dependent on the market-place. Generally, these two types of control are sufficient to maintain the status quo. However, in spite of all the difficulties, the pluralism in capitalist-bureaucratic countries allows a radical science to exist and develop.

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conclusions are important for quantitative dynamic comparisons. Yet, the picture is just as bleak for qualitative dynamic comparisons.

When some time ago the Left was further removed from the establishment in Western Europe than today, it believed that qualitative social change could be possible only "afterwards." To dream of qualitative social changes prior to a more or less complete overthrow of the established powers would have been considered an implacably "reformist" or "opportunist" attitude. In the seventies, however, the idea that a partial social revolution is possible "before," has gained many adherents even among the most radical Left.

It is claimed that a "cultural revolution" is taking place in capitalist-bureaucratic countries with the overthrow of certain social relations (between the sexes, between generations, in the family, in schools and universities, even in factories, etc.), the overthrow of certain values and attitudes of a significant part of society and the overthrow of accepted life-styles. The idea that a conflict conducive to qualitative social change could occur "before," shed new light on radical struggle. The conclusion was even reached that it is desirable for certain changes to occur "before" in order to guarantee the "after," i.e., if a profound change in life-style does not occur before "the decisive overthrow," subsequent results could deviate and reproduce considerable alienation.

Reactionary and repressive as it is, through political pluralism capitalist-bureaucratic societies can attain self-knowledge, self-confrontation, and self-change which allows them to undergo a relatively significant qualitative and quantitative change. On the other hand, *totalitarian absolutism prevents socialist-bureaucratic societies from doing the same.* An analysis of struggles in the Western industrial world during the sixties and seventies leads to these conclusions. If we analyze the changes brought about by such struggles as the sexual revolution (in the broadest sense of the word), the anti-authoritarian revolution in behavior, the revolution in life-styles, the revolution in workers' demands (more demands for power and quality of life, and less for wage increases), etc., we see that they all originated within industrial pluralism and only subseuqently did they drift into absolutist totalitarian industrial societies in a considerably weakened and distorted form. If we consider the lack of any significant social initiative to qualitatively change bureaucratic civilization in these countries, and the ever increasing social demands for change in terms of what has already been accomplished in the West (structure of production and consumption, life-style, etc.),[20] then it follows *that there is less self-dynamism within totalitarian absolutism*—at least in the last ten years.

20. That is, largely "acquisitive" and "family-oriented" (Andras Hegedüs) aspirations which are tending to become stronger and more widespread in socialist-bureaucratic societies today. If we also consider the general lack of credibility regarding information and official sources, and the advent of information fetishism in capitalist-bureaucratic countries, then the picture is

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What does this mean for future historical development? We can distinguish two extreme cases. One would be *the prolongation of the general tendencies of current development.* In this case, with considerably more self-dynamism, pluralist Western societies would be able to gain an appreciable qualitative social advance. In this context, Eastern industrial societies could either follow the path of pluralist self-dynamism, or else fall behind, in which case they would become increasingly more reactionary. They could revert, as in past centuries, to what Marx referred to as the "nest of European reaction." The other extreme case would be *the reversal of current trends:* strong social tendencies towards pluralization could provoke a basic rupture in the absolutist and totalitarian structures of socialist-bureaucratic societies. Even today (potentially), some of these institutions and ideologies are often more advanced than those of the West so that, under the impulse of a strong pluralist ferment, they could function as a framework for a social dynamic more focused than in the relatively less bureaucratized societies of the industrial West. The Prague Spring may have been a preview of such an alternative.

Between these two extreme cases lies a large number of possible combinations. For example, within the framework of real political détente, two types of alternatives can be envisioned. In the first the big powers could reach some firm accords and their dominant elites agree to a holy alliance regarding conflicts. Instead of favoring the global dynamic of industrial societies, here détente could hinder it. The other alternative would be détente favoring a process whereby socialist-bureaucratic and capitalist-bureaucratic societies would dynamically influence each other with their respective, more positive aspects. In this case, socialist-bureaucratic societies would not remain silent about Watergate and capitalist-bureaucratic societies would not ignore the elementary rights of Eastern non-conformists.

Without a doubt, the pluralization of socialist-bureaucratic societies and the "socialization" of capitalist-bureaucratic societies is the most immediate, desirable alternative for the powerless and, in perspective, for the radical challenge to bureaucratic civilization. The latter of these two alternatives, *a more social pluralism,* could become the political system of post-industrial bureaucratic civilization. In the long run, it would be able to introduce societies freed from dichotomy and class (and able to solve Third World problems). The first alternative could bring about a totalitarianism more complete and brutal than even Hitler dreamed of. There are, of course, many other alternatives between these two extreme cases.

The future of a *middle course* for industrial societies and for the world can be expressed in the following formula: *Social-pluralism or not—that is the question.*

rather gloomy. Often, even non-conformist intellectuals who are privileged with information have a very conservative attitude in regard to social-political reality in the western world. Where do we stand, then, with regard to the qualitative debate on bureaucratic civilization which has already reached appreciable dimensions in socialist-bureaucratic societies?

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From Critical Theory to Critical Ecology

by Vincent Di Norcia

For the critical social theory of the Frankfurt School, man's mastery of nature has always been double-edged, an ideology which often extended to the domination of men. Marcuse has argued for a new science and technology which would avoid this repressive double mastery; but another member of the school, Jürgen Habermas, rejected his proposal and others as mysticism.[1] Are we then precluded from conceiving liberation in terms of a nonrepressive mastery of nature, "a mastery guided by human needs that have been formulated by associated individuals in an atmosphere of rationality, freedom and autonomy?"[2] The increasing evidence of the ecological problems attendant to advanced technology's 'successes' also demands the development of a nonrepressive standpoint toward our natural habitat. But must that standpoint be romantic? Or is it a necessity of survival as well as of liberation? What would it mean in the context of critical theory's attack on historical objectivism and positivism and rejection of the irrational immediacy and activism of the new left? No mere repetition of old socialist saws can suffice here.

Critical theory can no longer presuppose an economics of abundance, as it once did.[3] For some classic problems have reappeared: inflation, starvation, blatant imperialism, resource exploitation, and even the threat of depression. The economy has lurched from the promise of abundance to the old fact of scarcity, even in the new industrial systems.

Once again material need, economic justice and political self-determination may dominate the struggle for liberation. The late shift of attention to cultural forms of liberation may have to readjust itself not only to an old focus on economics, but also to a new focus on nature.

Habermas' critique of the extension of technological rationality into the social world seems abstract and remote. Of course, critical theory is not meant to be a strategy manual. So my concern is to preserve critical theory's contribution while directing it to issues now relevant to the majority of people on this planet: those outside the advanced industrial centres. We can not think of returning to a pre-industrial economy. Yet, a more ecological conception of man's relation to nature must be developed, one which would not legitimate the continued exploitation of poor countries by the rich industrial states.

1. In *Towards a Rational Society* (Boston, 1970), pp. 81-91.

2. William Leiss, *The Domination of Nature* (Braziller, 1972), p. 212. He is referring to Marcuse's views in *One Dimensional Man* (Boston, 1964), pp. 236-237, and *Essay on Liberation* (Boston, 1969), p. 12. The ecological viewpoint is well presented in part V of McKinley and Shepard's *The Subversive Science: Essays toward an Ecology of Man* (Boston, 1969).

3. Albrecht Wellmer, *Critical Theory of Society* (New York, 1971), p. 55. Cf. *Towards a Rational Society*, p. 119; *Essay on Liberation*, p. 4.

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Habermas' interpretation of the connection of the empirico-analytic sciences to the technical human interest in control must be criticized in terms of this ecological problematic. The latter demands a revised conception of man's interest in the sciences of nature.

The Technical Human Interest

The core of Habermas' critical theory is his argument that different forms of knowledge are determined internally by the different human interests they serve. Conversely, each human interest includes a cognitive interest in that form of knowledge which will advance some form of life and action. There are three such interests, the "technical, practical and emancipatory." Each represents a "basic orientation toward technical control, toward mutual understanding in the conduct of life and toward emancipation from seemingly 'natural' constraints."[4] As cognitive interests, these human or life interests are "incorporated in the empirico-analytic sciences, in the hermeneutic or cultural sciences and in critical science." Each has its special form of expression or discourse: purposive rationality, everyday language and social critique. The forms of both knowledge and discourse are rooted in forms of action: instrumental or purposive-rational action, communicative or symbolic interaction, and emancipatory self-reflection or free communication.[5]

Now, the technical human interest in control is the historical root of the modern analytic sciences and technics of nature. The critique of the ideology of recent technology and science as a "rationality of domination" is directed to its extension into society. For this eliminates a distinction critical theory wishes to preserve: between technical control and social interaction.[6] As a result, Habermas argues, social communication is distorted, political questions become disguised as technical ones, technocrats replace citizens and the social realm is depoliticized. Serious conflicts in the system are evaded by the selective planning of the welfare/warfare state, whose technological rationale more and more has the function of legitimating its own actions. Science and technics become the main productive force.[7] In the periphery of the system there resides the greatest conflict potential,[8] that is, in the colonial areas. But even here any liberating perception of one's colonial status is often resisted or emasculated by a fatalistic sense of impotence, and the adulation of the superior wealth, culture and power of the empire.[9] We

4. Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (Boston, 1971), p. 196.
5. Habermas, *Towards a Rational Society, op.cit.*, p. 93.
6. *Ibid.*, ch. 4; pp. 79-82; pp. 97-102.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 52-58 and pp. 100-112.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
9. On the consciousness of oppression and cultural invasion see Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York, 1971), ch. 1 and pp. 150-166. Karl Francis, a geographer who works among the Eskimo, argues, "We are forcing out of existence virtually all cultural systems having any significant intimacy with natural environments" (in a paper read to the Western Regional

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then bewail its absence, which action paradoxically reinforces our dependence on the imperial ideology of technocracy.

The technological ideology of the advanced industrial societies is rooted in the technical human interest in "objects of possible technical control which can enter within the sphere of instrumental action."[10] Such objects would be recurrent, manipulable, measurable, and predictable.[11] The sphere of instrumental action comprises the new material base of the analytic sciences.[12] Despite its ideological expression, for Habermas the technical interest remains an objective interest of the species.

Here critical theorists divide. Marcuse proposes a "New Science and New Technology" in which, Habermas notes, nature "would no longer be the functional system of instrumental action. The viewpoint of possible technical control would be replaced by one of preserving, fostering and releasing the potentialities of Nature" by means of a nonrepressive form of mastery. But, Habermas continues, modern science is historically unique only if we can conceive some alternative to it. And we cannot, for technology must be "traced back to a project of the human species as a whole...and not to one that could be historically surpassed." He then cites Gehlen's argument for an immanent connection "between the technology known to us and the structure of purposive-rational action" regulated by its own results, according to which man takes different functions of his body and technically projects them. Habermas continues, "it is impossible to envisage how, as long as the organization of human nature does not change and as long therefore as we have to achieve self-preservation through social labor and with the aid of means that substitute for work, we could renounce technology, more particularly *our* technology, in favor of a qualitatively different one."[14]

Any suggestion that nature be treated fraternally as a subject instead of an object or other, consequently, is realizable only through the prior achievement of free communication among men. It is a pre-condition of the emancipation of nature. And inasmuch as the communicative and instrumental forms of action express two different projects of the species not restricted to any phase of history, Habermas' conclusion is blatant: "The idea of a New Science will not stand up to logical scrutiny any more than that of a New Technology, if indeed science is to *retain* the meaning of modern science *inherently* oriented to possible technical control. For this function, as for scientific-technical progress in general, there is no more

Science Association Annual Meeting, San Diego, 1972; "Rural Culture and Environmental Planning"). On "truncation" see the Herb Gray Report," "Domestic Control of the National Economic Environment: The Problems of Foreign Ownership and Control," in *Canadian Forum* (December 1971), pp. 4, 16f.

10. *Knowledge and Human Interests, op.cit.*, p. 311.
11. Leiss, *op.cit.*, p. 110.
12. *Knowledge and Human Interests, op.cit.*, pp. 347, 311f.
13. *Towards a Rational Society, op.cit.*, pp. 86-87.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

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'humane' substitute."[15] Habermas does see something historically specific about 'our' science and technology, its ideology of domination. But here again emancipation is possible only if we preserve the distinction between technical control and social understanding. Passive objects of control are not subjects of communication. This distinction constitutes a basic limit to emancipation in Habermas' theory.

He sees an implicit unity in modern science and technology. They are interdependent. They are one in having the same technological rationale. They derive from the same human interests. They constitute a new "quasi-autonomous productive force replacing industrial labour as the economic base of modern advanced societies."[16] They each involve the same "achievement ideology" and professionalism.[17] Just as there is a "scientization" of technics, so the sciences have both a technical moment, experimentation, and produce "technically utilizable knowledge."[18] The symbol of this unity is the theory and practice of cybernetics.[19]

Critical theory's position on sciences is rooted in the Enlightenment's perception of scientific reason as critical, as a tool of emancipation from superstition, dogma, force and authority.[20] But the social role of science has since changed. A scientific rationale now legitimates domination.[21] It has itself become a dogmatic and authoritarian tradition. Habermas criticizes the anti-democratic tendency of technocracy for taking the form of Weber's "decisionist model" of the separation of the sciences from social values and decisions with the result that politics "cannot rationally justify [its] own premisses" and fundamental values.[22] This is to be remedied by the "critical interaction" of the sciences and politics and the de-scientization of public opinion.[23] In consequence, Habermas argues, the scientific socialism of Marx's critique of political economy must yield to the critique of the "new materialism," of the ideology of modern science itself.[24]

In their more comprehensive *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer showed how subjective autonomy and the mastery of nature, each an essential element in Enlightenment rationality, dialectically rebounded: "The submission of everything natural to the autocratic subject finally culminates in the mastery of the blindly objective and natural... Men pay for the increase of their power with alienation from that over which they exercise their power. Enlightenment behaves toward things as a dictator

15. *Ibid.*, p. 88. Italics added.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 47, 100, 104f.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 32f, 41f, 22, 121.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 104.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 60, 106.
20. Cf. Wellmer, *op.cit.*, pp. 46f, 75, 133.
21. *Towards a Rational Society, op.cit.*, pp. 51f.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 66f.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 96, 111f.

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toward men."[25] Scientific culture's interest in technical control requires the denial of external and of internal nature: "The denial of nature in man for the sake of domination over non-human nature and over other men,...the nucleus of all civilizing rationality, is the germ cell of a proliferating mythic irrationality... As soon as man discards his awareness that he himself is natural the aims for which he keeps himself alive...are nullified. Man's domination over himself, which grounds his selfhood, is almost always the destruction of the subject in whose service it is undertaken... The history of civilization...is the history of renunciation. Everyone who practices renunciation gives away more of his life than is given back to him and more than the life that he vindicates."[26]

The Fichtean idealism and Kantian transcendentalism of Habermas' *Knowledge and Human Interests* are a graphic example of this dialectic of Enlightenment. For Kant's ethics of duty was anti-naturalist, and Fichte wrote in his *Staatslehre* that "the real worth of the human being" consists in man's capacity to produce "new masters of nature."[27] One way to resolve this split in critical theory is to present a more ecological and fraternal but still rational conception of the science and technics of nature. That alternative is, in my view, not just desirable. It is a practical necessity.

Ecology and the Human Interest in Nature

Given these difficulties can we still conceive of the human interest in the natural world as 'technical'? Indeed must it not be otherwise? To speak, with Habermas, of nature in terms of "possible objects of control" is too ambiguous.[28] His concern to keep technological rationality from dominating the social world may have blinded him to the necessity of conceiving the natural world as more than something to be controlled. For 'control' clearly implies domination: an active subject (man), controlling a passive object (nature). The Kantian flavor of Habermas' phrasing also *suggests* that control is of one object, system or set of objects. That is, there is a demarcation between the object controlled and its surroundings, and between controller and controlled. Such boundaries are in reality fluid and relative. To speak of them as rigid is an unacceptable implication for the critique of the connection of sciences and technics to nature. Worse, such language can be mystifying. For in reality we cannot fundamentally separate man from nature, or speak of them as controller and controlled.

Perhaps this kind of language is more bewitching where one's everyday habitat is that of an advanced industrial society or large urban settlement. Untouched nature is rarely contacted in such environments, for nature would have already been mediated many times over through varied

25. Cf. T. W. Adorno and M. Horkheimer, *The Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, (New York, 1972), pp.XVI and p. 9.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.
27. Leiss, *op.cit.*, p. 221.
28. *Knowledge and Human Interests, op.cit.*, pp. 121f.

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technologies of manufacture, transport, communications and settlement. Consequently the immediate environment of members of such societies is technological, the product of multiple human transformations of nature.

Such environments are not in fact simply human or natural. For culture cannot easily be separated from nature, and nature is a social category. Habermas' phrase, the "cultural break with nature," represents the classic demarcation of history or society from nature in terms of a "release from the constraint of nature."[29] This is part of the myth of mastery, so easy to accept within the life world of a technologically advanced society. We must then rewrite Lukács' dictum that "nature is a social category. . . whatever is held to be natural is socially conditioned."[30] For human culture is itself a category of natural history; whatever a culture holds to be social for itself is powerfully shaped by its habitat.

It is risky to deduce the human interest in nature from a technologically advanced culture's break with nature. In the peripheral regions of that culture one can see how the technical interest in control can take on the appearance of a species interest for those within it. Thus, Habermas' conception of technical control must either be discarded or divorced from a connotation of the mythic mastery of nature. In addition, the ecological sciences now provide us with evidence that human technics frequently constitute a destructive interference in natural processes.

Man's relationship to nature is, of course, unlike that of any other species. But this species difference yields no basis for the delusion of apparent control common in our technologically advanced cultures. From within them it is difficult to perceive the pervasive environmental effects of our technologies. We can separate ourselves from nature in our minds, but in reality we remain an animal species whose continuance is possible only within certain environmental parameters, graphically exemplified in the extremes of the almost inhabitable Arctic and the plentifully supportive tropics. Men can and do develop substitute or improved environments within those parameters, from cities to space capsules. But we cannot thereby evade the fact of our participation in the natural world. Indeed, many of our social symbols are derived from our natural environment, even when it has been technically transformed. Moreover, it is a half-truth to say that technologies are just utilitarian projections of bodily functions; they are also symbolic forms of self-expression and objects of self-inquiry.[31]

Habermas' claim that the human interest in nature is one of technical control cannot be maintained, for ecological problems have been a product precisely of the successes of technology in 'controlling' nature for human

29. *Ibid.*, p. 312.

30. Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness* (London, 1970), p. 234.

31. See Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media* (Toronto, 1964), ch. 4; and W. Lewis Mumford's *Technics and Human Development: The Myth of the Medicine*, Vol. 1 (New York, 1967), chs. 1 and 2.

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ends.[32] We must then formulate an alternative, ecologically sound, conception of this human interest. I will term it the 'natural human interest.' It would be the roots in the life world which give rise to, and act as a criterion for developing, the proper cognitive and practical interactions of men with their natural environments. It should not and can not be an irrational anti-scientific conception; nor should it be limited solely to scientifically based knowledge and practices.

The four laws of ecology proposed by Commoner may help to flesh out these abstract considerations. Each is proposed by him as "a generalization" based on what is already known about the "ecosphere."[33] "Everything is connected with everything else" is the first. Within any ecosystem its component processes operate at interrelated rates of exchange and reaction times, tied into an overall turnover rate. External intervention, namely, by a human technology, often unbalances such complexly interwoven processes; for such interference can overstress an ecosystem's self-corrective capacities. The moral of the story is a second law, "everything must go somewhere." There is no such thing as waste in nature. Everything men discard has an effect somewhere.

The third law, "nature knows best," constitutes an explicit denial of our mythic claim to a unique competence to improve upon nature. "Any major man-made change in a natural system is likely to be detrimental" to that system, however beneficial it may appear in terms of the restricted human ends it serves.[34] One reason is that such systems represent one of the rare successes naturally selected from a multitude of failures. Developing and discarding chemicals which then unbalance the capacity of rivers, lakes, the soil to support various forms of life is a common flouting of both the second and third law. This suggests the fourth: "There is no such thing as a free lunch." That is, you can't get something for nothing. Every gain has a cost. Technical successes in realising human ends may hide failures in natural systems. Commoner concludes: "The global system is an interconnected whole, in which nothing can be gained or lost and which is not subject to overall improvement."[35]

Consequently, the natural human interest must be seen as an interest in

32. Barry Commoner, *The Closing Circle* (New York, 1972), ch. 10. In the last 25 years, he notes, capitalists have developed such ecologically unsound new technologies as detergents, larger cars, biologically non-degradable plastics, containers, nitrogen fertilizers, emptied foreign chemicals into the water, smog into the air, and increased the travel distance from work to home. Cf. also H.M. Enzensberger, "The Critique of Political Ecology," *New Left Review*, 84 (March-April 1974), pp. 3-32. On alternative technologies to the present "advanced" forms, see Murray Bookchin, "Towards a Liberatory Technology," in *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (Berkeley, 1971), pp. 83-140.

33. Barry Commoner, *op.cit.*, p. 29.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 37

35. *Ibid.*, p. 42; for the evidence, see pp. 117-121. Compare to Hegel's statement in his *Philosophy of Nature:* "Nature itself, as it is in its universality, cannot be mastered in this manner [of using nature to defeat nature] however, nor bent to the purposes of man." Quoted by Leiss, *op.cit.*, p. 125.

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the proper form of cognitive and practical interaction with the natural environment, one which will allow benefit to men in securing their goals with the minimum harmful interference in natural processes. The preservation of human life, and indeed its improvement, cannot be based on the willful, unthinking and unnecessary destruction of other species or of the environmental supports of all life. The ecological problematic forces critical theory back into a more dialectical and materialist framework.

We shouldn't speak of a technical human interest in control underpinning the sciences and technics of nature. For this connotes the myth of human mastery. So to focus on the successful technological achievement of human purposes is to conceal their negative by-products in the environment. And the theoretical interest which technical control implies sublimates the repression of nature within and around us.[36] Even within scientific research, the passion for control often limits inquiry to insignificant matters. It seeks to minimize the risk of failure and is obsessed with techniques of manipulating animals and men. By seeing science mostly in terms of prediction and measurement it reflects the social relations typical of industrial capitalism.[37]

Given critical theory's penchant for searching out the social determinants and implications of the scientific and technological rationale of domination these points are not merely verbal. The natural human interest must clearly ground and reinforce the emancipatory interest. An instrumental or utilitarian external attitude toward systems of which we are a part to the core of our being is mystifying and ideological. That is why the liberating form of interaction of men with nature should not be seen as instrumental or purposive-rational but as *cooperative*.[38]

Revising the technical into a natural human interest also implies revisions in the form of man's knowledge and practices regarding nature. Commoner argues that ecological problems have arisen from technological success which in turn rested on a "corresponding failure in its scientific base...a specific fault, reductionism, the view that effective understanding of a complex system can be achieved by invesigating the properties of its isolated parts."[39] Reductionism refers to the "analytic" method typical in modern research, which as specialization, isolates the sciences from each other, from interaction with practical knowledge of the same subject matter, from the natural environment of their subject matter, and from related social and human problems. Thus, the typical methods of chemists and biologists preclude both their communication with each other and an understanding

36. Adorno and Horkheimer, *op. cit.*, p. 31 and pp. 35-42.

37. Leiss, *op. cit.*, p. 90f.; and Habermas, *Towards a Rational Society, op. cit.*, p. 90 and 63f.

38. On the significance of cooperativeness in evolution see P. Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid*, (Boston, 1902), chapters 1-3; A. Montagu, *The Direction of Human Development* (New York, 1955); T. Dobzhansky, *Evolution, Genetics and Man* (New York, 1955), ch. 6.

39. Commoner, *op.cit.*, p. 187.

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of the chemistry and biology of ecosystems.[40] While these arguments support Habermas' belief that sciences must communicate with each other and the public, they show that his use of the term "analytic" for the empirical sciences of nature is neither factual nor critical. For the sciences and technics of nature cannot be analytic in the senses noted above and also serve the natural human interest.

Ecology has given scientific concreteness to Hegel's dictum that truth is the whole. For the workings of an ecosystem cannot be grasped by analyzing it into "separate, simple events" or through "separate views of narrow slices of the environment."[41] Analytic univocity cannot capture the twin functions of humus. It at once absorbs and releases nitrogen. Rather, the analytic "tendency to think of only one thing at a time is a chief reason why we have failed to understand the environment and have blundered into destroying it."[42] At least one natural science, then, cannot be analytic: ecology. Against this misconception of science Engels' comment, in a letter to Schmidt (October 27, 1890), remains valid: "What these gentlemen lack is dialectics. They always see only here cause, there effect. That is a hollow abstraction...the whole vast process goes on in the form of interaction. As far as they are concerned Hegel never existed."

As analytic, advanced technics and sciences can now be seen to constitute a unity. They arise from the same interest in domination and manipulation. The scientific imperative to understand everything becomes in them a technological imperative to control everything. They express the same dominative code: formalize the informal, analyze the integral, organize the spontaneous and stabilize the dynamic. They express the same ideological rationale. To speak of it as a 'rationality' is misleading. This Weberian disguise of social reality in bourgeois mental form begs the question of the social source of such practices. For the standpoint of modern science and technics, the analytic method and the interest in domination is in fact rooted and expressed in methods of social control. The practices, values and techniques of industrial capitalism and bureaucratic manipulation determine and are reinforced by the analytic and dominative standpoint of modern sciences and technics.[43] There is also an imperialist dimension to their conquest of informal, non-analytic and more cooperative forms of the natural love and skills of other cultures. These latter forms of practical intelligence, with their informal, in-place skills of interacting with their own environments, have often displayed remarkable success in interpreting and coming to terms with their specific environments. As forms of knowledge they do not display the subject / object gap typical of the West's mathematization of nature but are integral parts of interaction with the

40. *Ibid.*, p. 190.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
43. Leiss, *op.cit.*, pp. 112f.

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environment. They are like a swimming snake's perception of water. Epistemologically, they differ from after-the-fact formal, theoretical and technical reconstructions of the logic-in-action of a practice.[44]

Accordingly, it is not to be assumed without specific evidence that in-place skills, like a mechanic's reading of the sounds and feels of an engine or a mother's reading of her children's behavior, can be replaced without loss by 'more advanced,' scientific techniques. The analytic, formal and technical transformations of informal forms of knowledge and interaction with nature constitute gains of themselves. The technical interest in analyzing, formalizing and controlling everything can be an expression of the imperialism of advanced industrial society in the form of its cultural invasion of other societies. That invasion has meant the destruction not only of lives but also of painfully acquired skills of knowledge of the natural and social world. Indeed advanced societies cannot teach other cultures how to live cooperatively off and with their own environments, since they are tied to their own industrial and urban tranformations of nature and to their generalized, formal replacements of the informal skills and insights of practical intelligence. Their assumption that our way is better is simply imperialist.

Now, this need not entail a return to the simple life, to magic, or to less productive farming, etc. The point is theoretical and critical. From the standpoint of the natural human interest, the natural sciences and technics of advanced societies are *but one means* for interacting with natural environments. They are not always the best. Both the natural interest of men and the knowledge and practices it requires must, moreover, be ecologically conceived. These claims rest on a twin foundation: the unity of men with nature as one species within the full system of living forms, and the understanding of what is human through the interaction of our animality and sociality.

This forces a different conception of the emancipatory potential of natural knowledge and practices. Free communication and the proper social direction of the productive forces of sciences and technics is not enough. The issue is not merely one of the ideological rationale of modern technology. This is an added twist discovered by the critical theorists. In fact, ecological disasters are being traced and predicted by scientists in a manner similar to Marx's critique of historical tendencies. In addition, as Commoner argues, they result from monopoly capitalism's deployment of new production techniques in the last twenty-five years. This was part of a policy of imperial self-sufficiency through developing synthetic products to replace natural ones supplied from colonial economies which had become more independent. Thus plastics replaced rubber. The classic goal of maximizing

44. A distinction made in A. Cicourel's "Basic and Normative Rules in the Negotiation of Status and Role," H.P. Dreitzel, ed., *Recent Sociology*, No. 2: *Patterns of Communicative Behavior* (London, 1970), pp. 4-49.

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profits reinforced this goal. For profits are exceptionally high when a firm introduces a new commodity into the market. This gives it a temporary monopoly position. This is why detergent replaced soap. Since the social costs of any product are not accounted in the books of the producing corporation, the environmental effects of their introduction are neither studied nor borne by the producer. Rather, the state and the people must pay those costs. If they were reckoned in the costs of production then such goods would no longer be so profitable. Lying at the root of this syndrome, Commoner argues, is the practice of treating as a "free" resource the "biological capital" of oxygen, water, soil and the ecosphere. If the disastrous effects of modern production technics on that biological capital were accounted for they would no longer be free. If this malign neglect of such effects continues a natural crisis will result. Lakes will die, the air will kill and the soil will become infertile. That crisis in nature would provoke the end of such production technics and therefore of capitalism. For capitalists cannot absorb the costs involved and continue to reap high profits.[45]

Consequently social and natural emancipation co-determine each other. The practices of men toward men and toward nature, and the knowledge of man and of nature must all be transformed together. It is an old custom to treat one's habitat as a free social good, not blithely to be tampered with, least of all for the immediate profit and power of the few. What is new is that an advanced technology can so interfere with nature as to undercut its own natural roots.

If we turn to the natural sciences for help we can not construe their role in emancipation as merely a matter of free communication and public discussion of their results. For this begs the question of how such democratization is originally possible. That is a matter of economic and social power and its revolutionary reallocation. Tied to this is the structure of power within the sciences. At present they are authoritarian, hierarchical and professionalist. This even prevents new but unacceptable discoveries from being received openly. The Chinese attempt to integrate mental and manual work would help to dissolve such elitism. Along with internal democratization, workers' control, it constitutes a prerequisite to achieving emancipation through the sciences. The full radicalization of the sciences is essential to the process of social liberation.[46]

In sum, where we are headed ecologically is clear: along a path on which the choice between domination and emancipation will sooner or later be forced on us not just by men but also by nature.

45. Commoner, *op.cit.*, ch. 12.

46. On these points, cf. G.S. Stent, "Prematurity and Uniqueness in Scientific Discovery," *Scientific American* (December 1972); the Postscript of T.S. Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, 1970); M. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (New York, 1958), pp. 136-171; S. and H. Rose, "The Radicalization of Science," *Socialist Register* 1972 (London); the essays in *Liberation* (March, 1972); T. Ferguson, "The Political Economy of Knowledge," *Telos*, 15 (Spring 1973).

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*Bertolt Brecht and Stalinism**

by Helmut Dahmer

The publication of Brecht's *Arbeitsjournal* (1938-1955)[1] makes it possible for us to ascertain Brecht's position regarding the domestic and foreign policies of the USSR under Stalin. The *Arbeitsjournal* contain mainly political notes which also discuss "literary themes." Brecht visited the Soviet Union three times. His first visit was in the spring of 1935, a period between the assassination of Kirov and the Seventh Congress of Komintern. Six years later, shortly before the Nazi invasion in 1941, while on his way to the 'New World,' Brecht travelled from Finland to Vladivostok. This time Brecht did not meet many of the friends that he had come to known in 1935.[2] His last trip was made in May of 1955, in order to receive the Stalin Peace Prize, nine months before the Twentieth Congress—the one where de-Stalinization clandestinely began.

A review of the readings shows that Brecht was familiar with the Marxist controversies over the social character of the Soviet Union. He did not close his ears to heretical theories as many did; instead, his political sense remained intact.[3] During his emigration, as well as later on in East Germany, Brecht had contact with such dissidents as August Enderle and Albert Scheiner;[4] he remained friends with Jacob Walcher[5] and Karl Korsch; he also met from time to time with such 'renegades' as Karl August Wittfogel.[6] Different entries seem to indicate a vague knowledge of Bruno Rizzi's theories.[7] In January, 1942, Brecht read Louis Fischer's *The Soviets in World Affairs;*[8] in December, he read Trotsky's little book on Lenin (published in 1924); and in July, 1943, he read the first well-documented biography of Stalin by Boris Souvarine. The described "conversion of the professional revolutionary into a bureaucrat, of a whole revolutionary party into a body of clerks," depressed him. Brecht characterized Stalinism as seeing in fascism "its distorted reflection, having none of its virtues, but all of its vices."[9] Somewhat later, Brecht extracted figures from London's *Economic Journal* (December 1941), "without which the development of the

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* Translated from the German by Wodek Szemberg.

1. Bertolt Brecht, *Arbeitsjournal,* ed. by W. Hecht (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1973). Vol. I: 1938-1943; Vol. II: 1942-1953; additional volume with notes by W. Hecht.
2. See Klaus Völker, *Brecht-Chronik, Daten zum Leben und Werk* (Munich: Hanser, 1971), p. 61.
3. This is apparent in his notes about the excesses of Soviet soldiers after the seizure of Berlin (cf. *Arbeitsjournal,* p. 850), or about the conversations with a tinsmith (*ibid.,* p. 1010).
4. See *Arbeitsjournal,* pp. 69, 77, 744, 999; and Völker, *op.cit.,* p. 79.
5. See *Arbeitsjournal,* pp. 744, 849, 875, 836; and Völker, p. 147.
6. *Arbeitsjournal,* p. 567.
7. See, e.g., *ibid.,* p. 70.
8. *Ibid.,* p. 355.
9. *Ibid.,* p. 589.

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USSR is difficult to understand."[10] The figures illustrate, among other things, the economic "success" of forced collectivization. Karl Korsch's views on the development of the Soviet Union[11] are missing in "Me-Ti,"[12] so that one must assume that Brecht had not read Korsch's oppositional periodical, *Kommunistische Politik* (1926-27).[13] Brecht is said to have subscribed to the German periodicals published by the (Trotskyist) Left Opposition. In his published works, however, there are very few signs of this knowledge. Trotsky's political views are being caricatured in the China series "Me-Ti" in a manner similar to that of official Party myth.[14]

Brecht's political thinking was brought to a halt by the dialectical problem of a complex society where, at a favorable time, a minority proletariat—led by a revolutionary Marxist party—had taken state power, a proletariat which, together with the support of the peasant majority, had conquered counter-revolution. Yet the proletariat had disappeared, leaving as its *caput mortuum* the thermidorian bureaucracy which for decades has held its inherited dictatorial power in the name of the (newly arisen) Soviet, as well as world, proletariat. The bureaucracy expanded territorially, constructing a reign of terror overshadowed only by that of German Fascism—simultaneously defending, nonetheless, its revolutionary, nationalized means of production, which have developed gigantically through a planned economy. The theorist and director of the anti-illusionary didactic theaters saw after 1933 (and certainly after 1941), between the defenders of the "great disorder" and those of the new "great order," no ground upon which he would be able to express publicly the whole truth.[15] Thus, he was satisfied with a partial (objectivistic) truth, according to which the nationalized means of production are the basis for a new society and must be defended accordingly. Brecht, however, did not distinguish between this "basis" and the Soviet state, the proletariat and the Communist Party of the

10. *Ibid.*, p. 614.

11. Brecht characterized the difference that separated him from his 'teacher' as the varying degrees of emphasis placed on their concepts of the 'workers' state.' Korsch saw in the USSR mainly a workers' *state*, whilch Brecht viewed the USSR as also a *workers'* state. See Brecht's letter to Korsch written at the end of November, 1941, quoted in Wolfdietrich Rasch, "Brechts marxistischer Lehrer," *Merkur*, no. 188 (October 1963), p. 999.

12. B. Brecht, *Me-ti, Buch der Wendungen*, in *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. V (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1967), p. 537.

13. The 'ultra-left' group around Korsch demanded already in 1927 a 'second party' in the Soviet Union. "By openly deciding to split, the Fifteenth Party Congress poses for the already existing opposition the task of formally taking over this new function, which substantially was already accepted through an elaboration of direct workers' demands, i.e., to accept the function of the representative of the real class interests of the Russian proletariat, even towards the 'Soviet state' governed by the 'Communist Party'..." In *Die zweite Partei in kommunistische Politik*, Vol. II, Nos. 19-20 (December 28, 1927), p. 2. See also three articles previously published: "Der russische Staatskapitalismus," in no. 6 (March 18, 1927); "Auseinandersetzung mit Trotzki," nos. 15-16 (August, 1927), pp. 5-7; "10 Jahre Klassenkämpfe in Sowjetrussland," in nos. 17-18 (October, 1927), pp. 1-3.

14. See *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. V, *op.cit.*, pp. 503, 522ff, 539.

15. See also the arguments in *ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 439, referring to the lack of freedom for writers in the Soviet Union.

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Soviet Union, or the Stalin-faction and the great organizer and butcher himself. He affirmed the "basis" and simultaneously affirmed the "top." Yet in 1935, at the Writers' Congress in Paris, he argued publicly against the new united front ideology.[16] But, since then he justified—mainly in confronting "liberal" intellectuals—soviet domestic and foreign policy with all possible arguments, often even bad ones.[17] To the public, as well as to himself, Brecht was an uncritical friend of the Stalinist Soviet Union. Even in 1956 he presented himself more as an enlightened Stalinist than an anti-bureaucratic revolutionary.[18] As Korsch's student, Brecht certainly retained his keen eye as a private individual and, in discussions with friends, a *reservatio mentalis*. During the summer of 1938, Benjamin noted Brecht's opinion on the situation in the Soviet Union: "There can be no socialist economy in one country... In Russia a personal regiment rules. 'The state has to disappear.' Who says so? The state."[19] His poem "The Peasant's

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 241-246. See also his story, "A Mistake" [*Ein Irrtum*], in *ibid.*, Vol. V, pp. 241-246.

17. In his polemic with Gide's book (*Retour de L'U.R.S.S.*, 1936), Brecht wrote that it is right that the policy of the party is not being criticized in the papers; "it is life, instead, that criticizes it; ...why not? When driving a car, I criticize its performance by steering it." *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. VIII, p. 438. On the question of the lack of freedom for Soviet writers, Brecht, answering against Huxley, says that in specific situations one can "destroy every action by over-discussing it" and that writers "express moods. In doing so they can proceed without any control." *Ibid.*, p. 440. In reading of a controversy between Soviet literary historians (Lifschitz, among others), Brecht criticizes the authoritarian and servile tone and mentions the lack of development of an important literature, but refuses to draw conclusions out of these phenomena in regard to Soviet society. But on the next day he follows up with a sociological explanation of the lack of development. Brecht writes that realistic art is "art that leads reality against ideologies..." (October 1943; *Arbeitsjournal*, pp. 636f.) Another example of the apologetic argumentation is Brecht's reaction to an article by Zhdanov (1947): "the Soviet Union forced...the available progressive writers to a leap which broke a great many necks."

18. Shortly before his death, Brecht wrote on the critique of Stalin: "One of the bad results of Stalinism was an impoverishment of the dialectic," since "without the knowledge of the dialectic, transformations such as the one from Stalin as a progressive to Stalin as a conservative force, are not intelligible ones." Such a transformation of political and social struggles into questions of methodology brings to mind the political positions taken by the late Lukács. (See in opposition to this Brecht's emphasis on the dialectic of reality [*Realdialektik*], for example, in *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 86.) Why does the author not speak of other results? Is it 'the dialectic' that makes Stalinism intelligible or is it a thorough knowledge of the politico-economic development of the Soviet Union and it possible alternatives? Without 'dialectics,' in Brecht's opinion, "the very 'negation' of the party by its own apparatus" is not understandable; "nor is the transformation of differences of opinion into power struggles." But wouldn't the classification of the question regarding the possible moves against this kind of dialectical turn be more important than a *post facto* dialectical understanding? Brecht ends in a manner reminscent of Togliatti: "the historical evaluation of Stalin requires an historian's attention." Why? What historian? And finally: "the liquidation of Stalinism can only succeed through a gigangic mobilization of the wisdom of the masses by the party"—of the masses, by *the* party!

19. *Gespräche mit Brecht* from the years 1934 and 1938 were published by R. Tiedemann in Walter Benjamin, ed., *Versuche über Brecht* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1966), pp. 117-135. Here pp. 130 and 128. Regarding the state that refuses to "wither away," see *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. VIII, pp. 622f, and *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 36. On the question of Bonapartism and 'individual rule' which concerned Brecht during his work on the novel on Caesar, see *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 14.

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Speech to his Ox,"[20] which shows that the idolatry of a useful animal is calculated, was explained to Benjamin by Brecht as "a homage to Stalin who, in his eyes, has done a great service."[21] "He follows the Russian development as well as Trotsky's writings. They establish that there is something suspicious... should it be proven one day, then it would be necessary to fight the regime publicly." But the suspicion is still no evidence; thus Trotsky's politics is "irresponsible." In the beginning of August, Brecht finally states: "In Russia a dictatorship rules over the proletariat. One should avoid as long as possible cutting oneself off from it insofar as this dictatorship still performs practical tasks for the proletariat..."[22]

In order to avoid mentioning the real contradictions of the "socialist" basis with the political and economic backwardness and isolation of the Soviet society—contradictions which could not be overcome by the Stalinized Komintern in the East (China) or in the West (Germany and Spain)—Brecht found refuge in abstraction and myth. People in the Soviet Union do not need personal freedom because they help in the development of an order which will facilitate unfettered production.[23] "Life under dictatorship is similar... One has to support and endure those dictatorships which act against the 'conditions of economic oppression.' These are namely dictatorships which tear out their own roots."[24] A typical illustration of Brechtian objectivism, focusing on the liberation of the forces of production and thereby neglecting its most important aspect, is a note on the similarity of fascism and Bolshevism.[25] In the name of different classes, both regimes carry out the centralization of the economy. "it is possible that the fascist counterrevolution saves the proletariat a gloomy phase by bringing this matter to an end (in the double meaning of the word). this makes the corporations better than the councils. it is a pity that kk [Karl Korsch] does not seem to understand this."[26]

Brecht, who wrote 'small'[27] for his private use, spoke without any irony about the revolutionaries as the "Classics," about their thought as the "great order." Thus, what he conceived of as aesthetically deficient, he made, within the realm of his political thought, into a commandment of the historical period: "already the presentation of increasing conflicts as a

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20. *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. IV, pp. 683f.
21. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 536; and Vol. VIII, p. 882.
22. Benjamin, *Gespräche mit Brecht, op.cit.*, pp. 128, 130, 131, 135.
23. See *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 690, and also *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. V, pp. 491, 495, 536; Vol. VIII, pp. 669 and 660f.
24. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 658.
25. Written after having read Korsch's article, "The Fascist Counterrevolution," in *Living Marxism* (1940).
26. A note from October 27, 1941; *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 307.
27. This alludes to the fact that Brecht ignored German grammar in private, beginning all nouns and sentences with lower case letters—*Translator's note.*

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condition which latently balances itself encounters today great obstacles. the writer, pursuing his own aims, eliminates too many tendencies of the described condition. we must constantly idealize, since we must endlessly take sides and propagandize accordingly."[28] His resolution to never too early explain anything as being unavoidable, was not heeded; in order not to be stuck with the unavoidable for too long, Brecht preferred the simultaneous formulation.[29]

In the process of formulating his position on the Moscow trials[30] (probably for Benjamin), Brecht convinced himself (as Ernst Bloch also did), of the plausibility of the charges and the truth of the confessions. He even attempted to support the official statements[31] by bringing in new explanations: "The trials are an act of preparation for the war... the oppositions...hang in the air, their propositions must all be counter-revolutionary and defeatist, the perspective from the swamp..." The dialectician did not ask here: what kind of preparation, whose, for whom, against whom? But shortly before, on the occasion of the Stalin Constitution, he wrote: "In case of war, the introduction of democratic institutions is necessary."[32] He was probably surprised when, later on, the leadership of the Red Army was put in front of the execution commando and 25,000 officers were purged. He would certainly not support "physical torture:" "it cannot possibly be accepted and does not have to be accepted."[33] Though it was not possible to postdate most of the "Writings on Politics and Society,"[34] ironically, at the end of the trial notes, there is Brecht's demand for a "task and struggle against the cult of personality [*Führergedankens*] within the party."[35] And a few pages later on, Brecht formulates the rights of trade-union members: "When a member is arrested, he does not have to go until another member of his union, requested by the arrestee, is present and goes with him."[36] Already in 1934, the GPU [Russian Secret Police] aroused Brecht's attention. In a conversation with Benjamin, he thought—thirty years before the Kafka Conference in Liblice—that Kafka's problem is one of organization, "and he foresaw certain forms of alienation as, for example, the activity of the GPU."[37] Four years later, Brecht and his collaborator, Margarete Steffin, had reasons to assume that Ottwald and Tretjakov were not alive.[38] In January, 1939, Brecht wrote down in the journal the names of those who

28. *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 238.
29. *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. VIII, p. 558; *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 11.
30. *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. VIII, pp. 667-672.
31. In "Me-ti" Brecht, nevertheless, conceives of them as lacking evidence.
32. *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. VIII, p. 657.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 669.
34. Cf. W. Hecht's Notes to *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. VIII, p. 63.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 677.
37. *Gespräche mit Brecht, op.cit.*, p. 120 (July 6, 1934); cf. also p. 124 (August 8, 1934).
38. *Ibid.*, p. 130 (July 1, 1938).

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disappeared, were imprisoned, or were in danger: Mihail Kolzow, Sergei Tretjakov, Carola Neher,[39] Bela Kün, Wsewolod Meyerhold, Asja Lacis, and Bernhard Reich. After making statements on art, theory, and the state, which ought to wither away through its completion [*Ausbauung*], he states: "for the marxist who is on the outside, the position to take is similar to the one that marx took in relation to german social-democracy. positive, critical."[40] This strange analogy is supposed to give the author a pseudo-justification for his position towards the Soviet leadership. Three months prior to this note, an article on "Stalin's Victims and the German People's Front" by Walter Held,[41] whom Brecht probably knew, was published in a Paris-based journal of the German Trotskyists (the IKD—*Internationale Kommunistische-Partei Deutschlands*). The names of known German Communists who had been shot in the Soviet Union were mentioned: Heinz Neumann, Herman Remmels, Herman Schubert, Werner Hirsch, Heinrich Süsskind, Rudolf Hans (Hausschild), Herman Kupferstein. The readers were informed of the fate of Felix Halle, Ernst Ottwald and Kurt Sauerland, who were at that time in prison. Held wrote: "One of Stalin's victims is also the actress Carola Neher, wife of the deceased poet, Klabund, who performed the role of Polly Peachum in the 'Threepenny Opera.' Frau Neher, who was close friends with the radical intellectuals around Brecht, Weill and Eisler, and who sympathized with Communism, fled in 1933 to the Soviet Union, which, in her naïveté, she believed to be a free country... According to reliable sources, she fell victim to the mass butchery of 1937. The saddest and most shameful chapter of this bloody tragedy is the position of the official German emigration towards the fate of the emigrants who went to the Soviet Union. The German 'Volksfront:' Heinrich and Thomas Mann, Bertolt Brecht, Lion Feuchtwanger, Arnold Zweig, the 'Weltbühne,' the 'Parisier Tagezeitung,' the 'Volkszeitung' and the 'Neue Front,' Max Braun, Pieck, Dengel, Merker and Jacob Walcher, all of them keep silent. You, Herr Brecht, knew Carola Neher. You know she was neither a terrorist nor a spy, but a brave human being and a great artist. Why do you keep silent?... If Felix Halle, Ernst Ottwald, Carola Neher, Rudolf Hans, etc., were imprisoned by Hitler and their lives were in danger, how you would scream, write, and prick the poor conscience of the world. But when Stalin kills the same people you are not moved in the slightest..."[42]

39. Brecht's farewell poem to Carola Neher ("Das Waschen"), contains a line: "I can't do anything for you." This inability was a result of Brecht's "propagandization." When the politician, due to "raisons d'état," kept his mouth shut, the poet wrote verses of memory, not of imagination.

40. *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 36.

41. Held was sentenced to death by the Nazis. Having a Norwegian citizenship, he fled from the Nazi troops in April, 1940, to Sweden and tried to go to the United States via the same route as the one used by Brecht later on. He was arrested together with his wife and his child on the Trans-Siberian Express and has not been seen since. See also Victor Serge, *Vie et Mort de Trotsky* (Paris: Amiot & Dumont, 1951), p. 308.

42. *Unser Wort*, Vol. 6, Nos. 4-5 (October 1938), pp. 7-8.

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Brecht commented on the Stalin-Hitler pact, noting "that the union saved itself at the cost of leaving the world proletariat without slogans, hope, and help."[43] The Communists, he said, attempted to justify the pact as a contribution to peace, but then a few hours later the war broke out.[44] On September 19, he noted that the Soviet invasion of Poland was handled in a "typically napoleonic manner;" there were "no councils." "The Komintern dissolves itself with the anti-Komintern and disappears."[45] On September 21, Brecht wrote that the Bolshevist party still has not changed, the people are 'the lever' for a diversity of ends, the government decides for the proletariat.[46] "it seems impossible for stalin to begin the war in a revolutionary manner..."[47] He defined the war between the Soviet Union and Finland as a preventive one. In regard to Poland and Finland, Brecht asked: "is one country still not sufficient for a construction of socialism? this would be insane. on hitler's side every regime in this world can only end in destruction, nothing else..."[48] The entry made on September 29, 1940, outlined the alternatives of Soviet foreign policy. In case of an alliance with Western powers there would be two alternatives: "1. the ussr supports simply the 'powers that be' and allows them to exchange the nazi system for a 'normal' capitalist one dependent upon western powers." This was a prognosis of the decisions made in Yalta and Potsdam. "2. she [the Soviet Union] organizes united fronts and endangers the war activity." The last sentence clearly expresses Brecht's rejection of revolutionary defeatism in the countries allied with the Soviet Union.[49] Brecht, who was against defeatism and for the subordination of the Communist Parties to the different foreign policies of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, accepted the self-dissolution of the Communist Party in the United States sarcastically: "the american communist party pays a compliment to the heroic red army in the form of harakiri."[50] "Under Stalin's leadership," Brecht wrote in "Me-Ti," "in the associations outside of su...it isn't the members who elect the secretaries, but the secretaries who elect the members. The slogans were

43. *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 62. The editor of the *Arbeitsjournal*, in his remarks about the persons mentioned by Brecht in 1939, laconically adds their dates of death (from 1939 to 1942). One quoted note—on "reprisals"—is drawn from the "History of the CPSU" (1971 version), and another from recollections of Bernhard Reich (which appeared in 1970). In the latter, Brecht's "quirk" is mentioned, along with the fact that "the times" make foreign correspondence difficult. Cf. *Anmerkungsband*, pp. 10f.

44. September 9, 1939. Cf. *Arbeitsjournal*, pp. 61 and 65.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 67. This critique (now directed against the SED) comes up again in the well-known poem "Die Lösung" ("The Solution"), written by Brecht after June 17, 1953. Cf. *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. IV, pp. 1009f.

47. *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 67.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

49. See *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. V, pp. 428f, and Brecht's demand "that every workers' party outside of the Soviet Union today should adjust its own policy to the policy of the CPSU and in the majority of cases must subordinate itself." *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. VIII, p. 656.

50. January 7, 1944; *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 644.

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arranged by su who also paid for the secretaries. If mistakes were made, one punished those who were critical of them; but those who committed them retained their public functions. Soon they were not the best anymore, but merely the most flexible..."[51] Brecht characterized this new type of party leadership elsewhere as "spiritually pretty poor, but forceful and sly, a petty bureaucracy that is able to keep the masses together."[52]

As the war was coming to an end, Brecht waited in vain for "signs of life" on the part of German workers.[53] Regarding the Postdam Conference, he noted: "only the russians could enforce a workers' government...but even then something like this would hardly develop into socialism."[54] After reading Lukács' study of the Schiller-Goethe correspondence, in which the German classicists' "elaboration" of the French Revolution was analyzed, Brecht wrote: "not having one of our own, i shudder at the thought of having to 'elaborate' on the russian one."[55] "this nation again makes a swindle out of a revolution through assimilation."[56] "only a few believe that any socialism is better than none;" the German workers don't seem to be ready to take over their own dictatorship.[57] But what happens under such "napoleonic conditions" to the claim of proletarian leadership,[58] to "self-initiative"?[59] Brecht did not give up his hope that the revolution from above could become a form for development of the workers' councils. This motivated his proposal for a "double organization." Workers' wives, for instance, would have to supervise the controls imposed by the police against the black market.[60] A similar idea was to transform the parliament [*Volkskammer*] by means of his "radio theory"[61] into an instrument for speaking and listening: "People must be able to write letters—even anonymous ones—to their representatives, and the representatives would then have to answer them... This would give the government a valuable view over the climate of opinion, the worries and the ideas among the people. People, on the other hand, would gain an organ."[62] This proposal, made July, 1954, signals a hope that is almost suffocated, but which, nevertheless, is still moving. Once again Brecht sees the class in action: a class in becoming, though without councils, without plans, confused by the class enemy, but "in their condition of deprivation, still a class." On June 17, 1953 [the occasion of the workers' uprising in Berlin—*translator note*] the

51. *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. V, p. 539.
52. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 605.
53. *Arbeitsjournal*, pp. 725, 732.
54. August 3, 1945, *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 749.
55. December 26, 1947; *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 804.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 513.
57. *Ibid.*, pp. 864f.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 438.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 353.
60. October 3, 1948; *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 859.
61. See *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. VIII, pp. 117-134 (1927-1932).
62. *Ibid.*, p. 886.

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party came at last into contact with the workers—"not in the form of a hug but in the form of a punch... the party must have been scared but it did not have to despair." "the great opportunity to win over the workers came disguised as a great importunity."[63]

Brecht, who in 1943 had written off J.R. Becher's new German nationalism as "opportunistic garbage,"[64] had problems with Germany's "anti-fascist democratic order." The conflicts with the culture bureaucracy within the Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschland were unending. There were, for example, discussions around the line, "Because no leader leads out of *the* mess" [*Denn kein Führer führt aus dem Salat*] which appeared in "Aufbaulied."[65] Brecht wrote, the red flag would come to be "discredited,"[66] and mentioned the attacks of Friedrich Wolf and Fritz Erpenbeck.[67] The "Herrnburger Report" would be discarded.[68] Brecht (in 1952) had to defend the Barlach show,[69] and a little later, Hanns Eisler's "Johann Faustus."[70] He wrote "with annoyance" on Eisler's crisis of production.[71] On the theme of art and the state ("Planung der Kunst"), he paraphrased Trotsky's plea twenty-five years earlier for the freedom of art, saying that it is better for the artists to show that one does not understand them than to attack them.[72] "in the realm of art, need seduces, as it does in sex, but, as in sex, no hard words should fall."[73]

In November, 1949, Brecht wrote in his *Arbeitsjournal*: "the *kleine organon* arrives in a period of time when the theater is mobilizing in progressive countries to produce effects desired by the state."[74] His theater in Berlin had a mostly middle-class public. After the successful opening of "Herr Puntilla," he asked himself critically: "but when will there be a genuine, radical epic theater?"[75] In Marcy, 1953, he noted: "our performances receive hardly any response anymore."[76] The notion of an anti-illusionary educational theater aims toward new art forms in acting and viewing. The radical epic theater can only develop in a post-capitalist society, whose citizens no longer tolerate any taboos, and where people, in

63. August 20, 1953; *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 1009.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 641.
65. *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 955f; *Arbeitsjournal*, pp. 881, 885.
66. *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 882.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 895.
68. August 17, 1951; *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 964.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 970.
70. See Brecht's "Works on the Barlach Show," *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. VIII, pp. 511-516, and his "Theses on the Discussion on Faustus," *ibid.*, pp. 533-537.
71. October, 1953; *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 1012.
72. See Trotsky's speech before the Central Committee of the Communist Party on April 10, 1924, in H.C. Buch, ed., *Parteilichheit der Literatur oder Parteiliteratur?* (Rowohlt, 1972), pp. 124-138.
73. *Arbeitsjournal*, p. 927.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 914.
75. November 11, 1949; *ibid.*, p. 912.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 1008.

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the process of a permanent revolution, would overthrow the rule of the new thermidorians and the opium of their bureaucratic myths. Nevertheless, Brecht's theory of the theater which in no way seeks to 'propagandize,' still reckons on "alienation, where officially liberation is being declared."[77] His dramas were sometimes read as Communist historical dramas, even when the author was far from such an immediacy. "The Measures Taken" (1929-30) was regarded by many as a dispute with the fatal policies of the Chinese Communist Party and their Soviet advisors in the years 1925-27. "Galileo" (the first version of which appeared in 1938) was interpreted as an educational drama about the Moscow Trials. Its problematic was conceived as a historical projection of the actual problems of such Bolsheviks as Zinoviev, Radek, Rakowski and Bukharin.[78] These interpretations are not simple misunderstandings. Rather, they grow out of an expectation aroused by Brecht's aesthetic conceptions. Only when the epic theater, "the learning place of practical wisdom,"[79] actually begins to critically appropriate the history of the Russian Communist Party and the Soviet Union and undertakes a fearless analysis of the struggles between factions in the twenties, the terror in the thirties, the five-year plans, and the Hitler-Stalin pact, the revolution from above and the anti-bureaucratic oppositon—only then does "peaceful co-existence" and the "great Cultural Revolution" become possible. And if this theater succeeds in realistically bringing on stage the faithful party intellectuals, as well as dissidents, then and only then will it fulfill its vocation in transitional societies.

77. Hans Mayer, *Brecht in der Geschichte* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971), p. 240.
78. See I. Deutscher, *Trotzki*, Vol. III (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1963), pp. 345f.
79. Friedrich Schiller, *Due Schaubühne als eine moralische Anstalt betrachtet* (1784).

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NOTES AND COMMENTARY:

Crutches vs. Stilts: An Answer to James Schmidt on the Frankfurt School

by Martin Jay

James Schmidt's attack on my reading of the Frankfurt School, despite his intemperate and sarcastic tone, frequently muddled understanding of Critical Theory, and unwarranted reliance on Russell Jacoby as some sort of authority, raises a number of crucial and disturbing questions. In answering him, I hope to clarify some of the issues I treated in my earlier *Telos* piece and to contribute to what should be an ongoing debate on the merits of the Frankfurt School's achievement. Schmidt begins his onslaught by accusing me of being that most base of academic neutralizers, an intellectual historian, who delights in the interplay of ironic nuances and sees the Frankfurt School as fit for a cultural museum. Although I must plead guilty to the first charge, it has never been my intention to smother the Frankfurt School under the weight of ironic paradoxes or to relegate it to a hall of historical curiosities. In fact, I have written about the contemporary vitality of Critical Theory in several places and continue to see it as among the most significant currents of radical thought today.[1]

Rather than acknowledging this position, Schmidt takes my conclusion that the Frankfurt School has not solved all of the problems raised in its critique of Mannheim to mean that I think its work is a "grand failure." This is nonsense, but it somehow gives him license to take an unequivocally defensive position towards Critical Theory, rather than engaging in true reflection on its assumptions and implications. Thus, Schmidt argues that "one can only renew its criticisms against the new forms its old opponents have taken," as if the sole options are burial or praise. His own motivation is given away when he universalizes his initial attraction to Critical Theory: "We are all to some extent intellectual cripples, stumbling around in search of the crutches which have been hidden..." Because I have followed the Nietzschean injunction so admired by Horkheimer: "A great truth wants to be criticized not worshipped," and thus kicked a bit at his crutches, Schmidt concludes that my version of the Frankfurt School "must be denied" (N.B., "denied," not refuted). "To be true to Schönberg," Adorno once wrote, "is to warn against all twelve-tone schools."[2] To be equally true to the achievement of the Frankfurt School is to warn against its apotheosis at the hands of epigoni like Schmidt and Jacoby. The point is not to blur its rough edges, as Schmidt wrongly accuses me of doing, but rather to explore the ways in which these edges cut and to face, if necessary, the possibility that some may undercut the arguments made elsewhere in the Frankfurt School's history.

In making his case against my interpretation of the Frankfurt School, Schmidt charges me with two methodological fallacies: "first, Jay often substitutes an identi-

1. "The Frankfurt School in Exile," *Perspectives in American History*, VI (Cambridge, 1972); "Some Recent Developments in Critical Theory," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, XVIII (1973-74).

2. Theodor W. Adorno, *Prisms*, trans. Samuel and Shierry Weber (London, 1967), p. 166.

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fication of the intellectual pedigree of a concept for a consideration of the theoretical position which the concept entails and second, imported categories are applied indiscriminately, blurring the point of the original concepts they label and thus making for facile statements of identity." His first accusation rests on one actual instance in my *Telos* article and two allegedly derived from my other work on the School. The former is Marcuse's indebtedness to Heidegger, which I acknowledge in discussing his 1929 review of *Ideology and Utopia*. My reason for mentioning this fact was not to place Marcuse by identifying him with his former teacher, but rather to acknowledge that the essay may not fully qualify as a Frankfurt School document. Marcuse himself has been critical of his Heideggerean period and it thus seemed relevant to warn the reader that some caution might be in order when assigning his views to the School as a whole. Despite this caveat, I do take the essay seriously as a way-station between Lukács and the later Frankfurt School, which cannot be dismissed as a Heideggerian Marxist miscarriage. Schmidt cannot have read my paper very closely if he argues that I stop at this point and neglect the substance of Marcuse's criticism of Mannheim. Apart from his making the obvious point that Marcuse as a Marxist saw capitalist society as contradictory, I fail to see any significant difference between Schmidt's version of that criticism: "Mannheim's linkage of consciousness to 'being' tends to ignore the fact that this historical being must be viewed as not simply a static present, but rather contains potentialities which need to be subjected to an evaluation which attempts to see if the opportunity exists for a revolutionary realization of possibilities which are presently hindered by capitalist organization," and my own: "To Marcuse, Mannheim's understanding of society was undialectical, lacking an appreciation of what he called the 'intentional' character of social being. That is, Mannheim reified society as a given and missed the constitutive role consciousness itself played in the creation of social reality. To posit a fixed social being which unreciprocally conditions thought was to fall back to a pre-Lukácsian, indeed pre-Marxist materialism." In both formulations, Marcuse's criticism of Mannheim's tendency to assume a fixed, harmonious social being is clear. To say, as Schmidt does, that I assign a label to Marcuse and thus fail to see that Marcuse is attacking a *Gestaltist* view of the totality is nonsense. His further claim that this obscures the distinction between a "functionalist" and "elective affinity" approach to the sociology of knowledge is equally misguided, as we shall see when we return to these categories.

The first of Schmidt's inferred pedigrees is the alleged derivation of the Frankfurt School's abhorrence of identity theory from Kant via Hans Cornelius, rather than Marx. That I nowhere mention Cornelius in the article is no problem to Schmidt, who seems to think I have argued in *The Dialectical Imagination* that Cornelius and Kant are solely responsible. He thus ignores the role that Horkheimer's early reading in Schopenhauer, Adorno's training in atonal music in Vienna, and their joint reading of Freud all had on the stress on non-identity, which I have discussed in the book and elsewhere.[3] He further misses the impact Walter Benjamin, himself deeply indebted to the neo-Kantian Rickert, had on Adorno, which Susan Buck-Morss has admirably demonstrated.[4] By saying that because Horkheimer and his colleagues

3. *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-1950* (Boston, 1973), pp. 44, 48, 71; "The Frankfurt School's Critique of Marxist Humanism," *Social Research*, XXXIX, 2 (Summer, 1972), pp. 298-299.

4. Susan Buck-Morss, "The Dialectic of T.W. Adorno," *Telos*, 14 (Winter, 1972).

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might have found all the ammunition they needed in Marx's writings, therefore they in fact did, Schmidt falsifies the actual intellectual sources of their distance from Hegelian Marxism. In fact, in later years, they would stress the extent to which Marx himself had fallen victim to the attraction of identity theory and the lure of positive reconciliations. In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno would write: "Not only Hegel, but Marx and Engels—whose idealism was hardly anywhere as pronounced as in relation to totality—would have rejected all doubts of the inevitability of totality. No one who means to change the world can help feeling such doubts, but Marx and Engels would have warded them off like fatal attacks on their own system rather than upon the ruling system."[5] Moreover, when I mentioned the "almost Kantian agnosticism" which crept into their later writings, I was thinking of the complex and not entirely negative appraisal of Kant in *Negative Dialectics*[6] and not the influence of Cornelius four decades earlier.

The second alleged pedigree Schmidt claims I invoke is the impact of the Jewish taboo on naming or picturing God on the Frankfurt School's refusal to flesh out its normative ontology. In the *Telos* article, I mention this argument only in passing and then merely to say that Horkheimer himself came to explain the refusal in these terms. In *The Dialectical Imagination*, I also bring this issue up, but only to conclude sceptically that "whether or not the Jewish taboo was actually causal or merely a *post facto* rationalization is difficult to establish with certainty."[7] It is amusing that Schmidt should call Alfred Schmidt as a witness on the side of a purely Marxist interpretation, as it was in a conversation with Alfred Schmidt in 1969 in Frankfurt that I first heard the Jewish taboo argument seriously proposed.

But the issue of pedigrees is an essentially subsidiary one, as I would agree with Schmidt that intellectual creativity does not come from the eclectic integration of various influences, but rather from the way in which old categories are given new force. I would disagree with him, however, in assuming that everything in Critical Theory can be found in Marx, the one pedigree that is so completely thoroughbred that Schmidt and Jacoby can rely on it as the ultimate justification for calling the Frankfurt School unequivocally revolutionary. Whenever a traditional tenet of Marxism is shown to be at variance with Critical Theory, it is dismissed as "vulgar Marxist," a tactic which I will discuss later in dealing with the problem of *praxis*.

I would also quarrel with their assumption that "imported categories" necessarily blur and weaken the power of the original concepts they are intended to illuminate. This is the second methodological fallacy Schmidt accuses me of committing, specifically because of my using Werner Stark's typology as a suggestive rubric to group varieties of sociology of knowledge.[8] Here there are essentially two issues involved. First is the possibility of translating categories from one universe of discourse or problematic into another without violating the integrity of the initial vocabulary.[9]

5. Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E.B. Ashton (New York, 1973), p. 321.
6. See, for example, his remarks on p. 406: "It lies in the definition of negative dialectics that it will not come to rest in itself, as if it were total. This is its form of hope. Kant registered some of this in his doctrine of the transcendent thing-in-itself, beyond the mechanisms of identification. His successors, however stringently they criticized the doctrine, were reinforcing the spell, regressing like the post-revolutionary bourgeoisie as a whole: they hypostatized coercion itself as the absolute."
7. *The Dialectical Imagination*, p. 56.
8. Werner Stark, *The Sociology of Knowledge* (Glencoe, Ill., 1958).
9. In the history of the Frankfurt School, resistance to literal translation from German to

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Now, inevitably some reduction is bound to happen, some residue will be left over after any translation. But unless done with no regard whatsoever for the original mode of thought, something may well be gained by such a translation, that something being an increased awareness of the implicit assumptions of the original problematic. Marxists, of course, do this all the time, the primal example being Marx's reexamination of the premises of Classical Economics. Any attempt to develop a metalinguistic approach, whether Althusserian, Habermasian, or whatever must necessarily be grounded in the belief that translation is worth the risk of distortion. Thus, even dialectical thinking, which is normally seen by Marxists as a meta-level above positivist and empiricist thought, may itself profit from a translation of its premises into a new vocabulary. This is why the structuralist attack on Marxist Humanism, for all its faults, has been essentially salutary. Indeed, one might even argue that dialectics may benefit from an occasional return trip from the heights to the banalities of common sense, dare I say, even empiricist modes of thought. There is little to be gained by treating its way of thinking as a hermetically closed system which can only be corrupted by contact with alternative approaches. The goal of such an interaction is not, to be sure, a flabby eclecticism, but rather the avoidance of a privileged, cult-like scholasticism which is circularly self-contained. Moreover, unless dialectical theoreticians are willing to engage in this sort of interchange, they risk preaching to the already converted. As Horkheimer always argued, there is a place for both *Verstand* and *Vernunft* in making sense of our contradictory world.

This then is the more general issue raised by Schmidt's defensive attitude towards the privileged position of Critical Theory. The more specific concerns the applicability of Stark's categories for this task. As readers of my initial article will recall, Stark suggests three general ideal types of the sociology of knowledge: causalistic, seeing ideas mechanistically as epiphenomena of social reality; functionalist, positing analogous relationships between ideas and institutions within a totality, rather than causal ones; and elective affinity, arguing that ideas are autonomously conceived, but may correspond at certain times in history with the interests of one social group or another. It was my argument that Mannheim was essentially a functionalist sociologist of knowledge, and that in certain respects Lukács was as well. The Frankfurt School, on the other hand, represented a more complicated case, as it combined a functionalist and an elective affinity approach with an increasing emphasis on the latter.

Schmidt's argument against me is based on what he sees as the incorrect conflating of Lukács and Mannheim into one basic position, and the concomitant overemphasis of the Frankfurt School's distance from Lukács. He claims that Lukács overcame the formally holistic basis which continued to mark Mannheim's writings.

English has played an important role, especially in Adorno's case. Although there is certainly truth in the contention that some of the power of his writing is tied to its linguistic expression, it would be absurd to conclude that any translation is bound to neutralize his thought. It is of course preferable to read the Frankfurt School texts in the original, but judging from the way in which they were used in the 1960s in Germany, this is no guarantee against their misinterpretation. Although a case can be made for trying to preserve a writer from absorption into the prevailing mode of discourse, it can be carried so far that the communicative function of language is jeopardized. An analogous argument holds for conceptual translations. For an interesting reflection on this issue, see Reinhard Kreckel, "Critical Theory Confronting Sociology: The End of Two Monologues," *Sociology*, VIII, 3 (September, 1974).

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The way out, he suggests, was Lukács' concept of "concrete totality," which linked the "individual concrete components of capitalist society" into a mediated whole. I regret very much that my paper on totality in Lukács and Adorno[10] was not available to him when he read my *Telos* article, for I go into the differences between their respective uses of totality in greater detail there. But even on the basis of what was available to him, he seriously misunderstands my argument. First, he incorrectly says I attribute the same position on totality to Mannheim and Lukács because they can be put under the same functionalist rubric. Perhaps the more traditional sociological use of functionalism has led him astray here. For the functionalist sociology of knowledge, as I understand it and perhaps should have made clearer, does not necessarily imply a harmonistic, *Gestaltist* notion of totality in which all elements of the whole are reconciled in a positive way *at the present*. This was, to be sure, Mannheim's position, as his relationism argued that the truth of any one moment in history could be ascertained by integrating the ideas analogous to all of the significant social strata of society. For Lukács, in clear contrast, only the proletariat was the truth-bearing social group, because it was the only universally totalizing force in capitalist society. The truth did not reside in the totality as it existed, but rather in the totalization imminent in the proletarian revolution. Mannheim was harmonistic in the immediate present, whereas Lukács was harmonistic in the near future. After the revolution, when the proletariat is both subject and object of history, the type of reconciled totality for which he yearned in *Theory of the Novel* will be achieved. It is through the *praxis* of the proletariat that the antinomies of bourgeois thought and society will be overcome. Included in these antinomies, of course, are the distinctions between facts and values and phenomenal and noumenal knowledge. Thus, for both Lukács and Mannheim, truth resides in the totality, although for the former the totality is in the process of creation. Lukács is not saying, as Schmidt suggests, that the concrete totality of capitalist society is true, but rather that a new truth-becoming totality is being born which will be different from the present insofar as its contradictions are overcome.

Lukács can be understood to have a functionalist sociology of knowledge in another way besides his substitution of the imminent totality for the economy as the locus of truth. As noted before, functionalism rejects a causal for an analogous relation between knowledge and social being. Although there is a residue of causality in Lukács's notion of proletarian *praxis* as the source of the true totality, he undercuts this argument by his notion of imputed class consciousness. What Lukács does by this notorious claim is to discount the empirical relation between the working class and Marxist theory and substitute a correspondence between an objectively derived class consciousness and the theory, which is somehow its analogue. He can therefore still claim that his version of Marxism is the theoretical expression of proletarian *praxis*, without showing how the actual political activity of the workers gives rise to the theory.

In essence, this is the position Marcuse adopted in his 1929 review of *Ideology and Utopia*, in which Mannheim is praised for seeing Marxism as the ideology corresponding to proletarian *praxis* and attacked for positing a harmonious totality at the present. But, as I tried to show in my first article, the Frankfurt School

10. It will appear in a volume of essays edited by Shlomo Avineri, entitled *Varieties of Marxism*, to be published later this year by the Humanities Press.

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quickly distanced itself from the belief that Critical Theory expressed analogically or otherwise the *praxis* of any social group. Furthermore, it repudiated Lukács' notion of the proletariat as a totalizing force with universal pretensions, and indeed began to doubt that any positive totality in which the antinomies of bourgeois existence would be reconciled was on the historical agenda. By the 1940s, "totality" itself had lost almost all of the positive resonance it had had in Lukács and became a word with sinister implications, mocking the expectations of the Hegelian Marxists, and especially the Lukács of the early 1920s. In other words, to adopt structuralist jargon for a moment, they jettisoned the expressive use of totality in *History and Class Consciousness*, and when they used the term, as they continued to do, it was in a way very different from both Mannheim and Lukács. In fact, it was closer to what the structuralists call decentered totality. In his anxiety to link Lukács and the Frankfurt School, Schmidt fails to see how troubled Horkheimer and his colleagues were by the idealist nature of Lukács' totality. One need only read the correspondence between Adorno and Siegfried Kracauer,[11] who disliked Lukacs intensely, to see how early this feeling appeared. And one need only read *Negative Dialectics* to see how long it lasted. In that work, Adorno warned against Lukács' celebrated stress on reification, which grew out of his belief in the proletariat as the subject-object of history: "There is a good deal of irony in the fact that the brutal and primitive functionaries who more than forty years back damned Lukács as a heretic, because of the reification chapter in his important *History and Class Consciousness*, did sense the idealistic nature of his conception. We can no more reduce dialectics to reification than we can reduce it to any other isolated category, however polemical."[12] Although Schmidt may think that Lukács overcame a formal holism, this was certainly not the belief of the Frankfurt School. Jacoby has correctly noted that "there was no love lost between the Frankfurt School and the later Lukács;"[13] what both he and Schmidt misunderstand is the extent of their disagreement with the early Lukács as well.

A further and critical difference between Lukács and the Frankfurt School concerns their attitudes toward *praxis*, which Schmidt mentions in passing only to say that Jacoby has somehow answered all questions on this issue. For Schmidt, a simplistic repetition of the magic formula "the unity of theory and practice" is typical of "vulgar Marxism," as are the clichés about the labor theory of value and the central role of the proletariat. Because I bring these issues up, "vulgar liberalism bails out vulgar Marxism."[14] There can, of course, be no doubt that the automatic evoking of this slogan can easily become a cover for action as an end in itself, and certainly I would agree with the Frankfurt School that there are times when caution and restraint are clearly appropriate. The eleventh thesis on Feuerbach ought not to be treated like a commandment from on high which admits of no discussion. But in

11. See especially Adorno's letter to Kracauer of May 16, 1930, in the Kracauer *Nachlass* (Schiller Nationalmuseum, Marbach am Neckar).

12. *Negative Dialectics*, p. 190.

13. Russell Jacoby, "Marxism and the Critical School," *Theory and Society*, I, 2 (Summer 1974), p. 236.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 234, and quoted by Schmidt. It would be instructive to analyze the significance of the word "vulgar" in the lexicons of Marxists like Jacoby and Schmidt. Although one would not like to share the typical liberal *Schadenfreude* directed at elitist Marxists with contempt for the people they hope to save, there is nonetheless something extremely distasteful in the way the charge of vulgarity so easily comes to their lips. That contemporary Marxism can overcome the condescension this implies is shown by the admirable work of Raymond Williams.

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the history of the Frankfurt School, the notion of *praxis* was not merely understood as theoretically informed action, and therefore something that could be put in abeyance when the theory could see no action to endorse. It had another function as well, which relates to the basic question of the Archimedean point of true consciousness, the key issue raised in my paper.

To Jacoby, the Frankfurt School's writings never possessed "an immediate relation to praxis; if they had a practical impact it was by way of theory itself."[15] Their fundamental position, he argues, was expressed in Horkheimer's admonition that "on the identity of theory and *praxis* is not to be forgotten their difference."[16] This certainly is a key phrase in the Frankfurt School's troubled dealings with the issue of *praxis*, specifically in its critique of pragmatism, but it is by no means unambiguous. For Horkheimer is not rejecting *praxis* out of hand, but merely warning against a premature reconciliation between the theoretical and the practical. The key word here is "premature," for in the Institut's work of the 1930s, the confidence that *praxis* was indeed a real possibility was clearly evident. In the essay that contains this sentence, "Zum Problem der Wahrheit" of 1935, Horkheimer wrote: "The verification and confirmation of ideas which relate to men and society does not consist of laboratory experiments or in the search for documents, but in historical struggles, in which conviction itself plays an essential role."[17] "The process of knowledge," he wrote elsewhere in the same piece, "is connected as much to real historical willing and acting as to experience and concepts."[18] And still elsewhere: "Truth is a moment of correct *praxis*; but whoever immediately identifies it with success jumps over history and makes himself into an apologist of the dominant reality."[19]

What these sentences make clear is that *praxis* played a key role in the Frankfurt School's thinking in the pre-war period, but not the same one it did for Lukács. Whereas for him, theory *arises* out of the imputed *praxis* of the proletariat because of its universal totalizing function, for the Frankfurt School, theory, whose origins are unimportant, is *verified* by *praxis*, albeit in the long run. But what was problematic in their analysis was the vagueness of the agency of *praxis* and indeed their severing of *praxis* from the labor process where Marx himself—by the reckoning of Jacoby and Schmidt, the first "vulgar Marxist"—had placed it. *Praxis* thus became a court of last resort to judge the validity of a theory, but who was on the jury the Frankfurt School did not choose to say.

Perhaps because of my "lazy" use of categories, I see a serious divergence from Marxism here, although one which may be far more honestly justified than a ritualized endorsement of the working class. But beyond this difference, in more recent years, the Frankfurt School's attitude towards *praxis* evolved in a direction still further removed from Marx. The watershed was Horkheimer's wartime essay "Authoritarian State,"[20] which marked less of a culmination of Critical Theory, as

15. Jacoby, "Marxism and the Critical School," p. 235.
16. Horkheimer, "Zum Problem der Wahrheit," in *Kritische Theorie*, I (Frankfurt, 1958), p. 256.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 244.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 247.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 256.
20. Horkheimer, "The Authoritarian State," *Telos*, 15 (Spring, 1973). For Jacoby's reading of this article, see his "Postscript to Horkheimer's 'Authoritarian State'," in the same issue of *Telos*. He defends it against traditional Marxist-Leninist calls for concrete political action, which is justified, but in so doing he repeats his frequent contention that the essay has no

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Jacoby has wrongly argued, than a turning point. After the war, the Frankfurt School ceased believing that Critical Theory would be verified by *praxis* at all. The classic statement of this shift once again can be found in *Negative Dialectics*, where Adorno remarked: "Philosophy, which once seemed obsolete, lives on because the moment to realize it was missed. The summary judgment that it had merely interpreted the world, that resignation in the face of reality had crippled it in itself, becomes a defeatism after the attempt to change the world miscarried... A practice indefinitely delayed is no longer the forum for appeals against self-satisfied speculation."[21]

What this new sobriety implied, as I tried to suggest in my original essay, was that the Frankfurt School broke with a functionalist sociology of knowledge entirely; now no analogy was said to exist between theory and its social embodiment, embodiment understood either as the genesis of the theory or its verification. Instead, they approached the position Stark has called elective affinity, if indeed they retained any acknowledgment of the relation between thought and social being at all. They never used the micro-sociology of knowledge, in which ideas are related to the specific situation of their originator, and abandoned for all practical purposes the macro-sociology of knowledge, in which ideas are related to the society at large. Or more correctly, when they employed the latter, it was largely to denounce in a somewhat imprecise way certain ideas as "bourgeois." Thus a work like *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* ranged over the entire history of Western society in which the domination of nature was observed to be a salient feature. But the existence of critical, negative ideas was never rigorously tied to any specific social element.

Adorno's hostility to a functionalist sociology of knowledge was of such magnitude that he could distort the truth-seeking aim of Mannheim and his followers in arguing for the superiority of a philosophy with no social connection at all: "A sociology of knowledge fails before philosophy: for the truth content of philosophy it substitutes its social function and its conditioning by interests, while refraining from a critique of that content itself, remaining indifferent toward it."[22] The sociology of knowledge, according to Mannheim, did not merely seek social function; it defined truth, or at least axiological truth, as grounded in social function. Lukács did the same, with the crucial difference that for him only one social group had the privileged function that would allow its spokesmen to know the truth. For the later Frankfurt School, however, there was no social function that could express the truth because the totality of society was corrupt, or "satanic," as Adorno was to call it in *Aspekte der Hegelschen Philosophie*.[23] Thus, there was an important shift in Critical Theory which left the ground of true consciousness *within* the current

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relation to *praxis* whatsoever. Paul Breines, who introduced the essay, is far nearer to the mark when he writes: "That the essay was probably idiosyncratically Leftist even within the Frankfurt School group may be the main reason it was not published in 'official' form. The other notable aspect is the fact that it contrasts with the bulk of Frankfurt School writings not only in its directly political formulations, but in its ringing affirmation of revolutionary hopes and prospects" (p. 2). "Authoritarian State" was the last time such sentiments were voiced by Horkheimer or Adorno, and it is thus incorrect to see the essay, as Schmidt does, as representative of the Frankfurt School's perennial response to calls for the ground of true consciousness.

21. *Negative Dialectics*, p. 3.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 197.
23. Adorno, *Aspekte der Hegelschen Philosophie* (Frankfurt, 1957), p. 33.

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totality uncertain. *Praxis* could serve as the verification of theory when Horkheimer was able to argue, as he did in "Authoritarian State," that Critical Theory "confronts history with that possibility which is always concretely visible in it."[24] But when this visibility waned, as the Frankfurt School surely came to believe, no such verification was at hand.

Schmidt not only misses the subtle change in the Frankfurt School position,[25] but he also gives a muddled explanation of why I think it is a crucial one. He argues that I want stilts to climb above the historical fray to get a "vantage point outside the totality of history." Such "stilts" would make Critical Theory "respectable," and thus give me a secure "place from which history may be contemplated." In his version of Critical Theory, the grounding of values is unnecessary because in Horkheimer's words, it "is in its totality, the unfolding of a single *existential judgment,*" which he then says is "based on Marx's notion of the general course of the commodity economy." But what he fails to grasp is that the Frankfurt School came to question the Marxist belief that the commodity economy had any "general course," and concomitantly, that there was a single existential judgment that could be unfolded. This meant that the ground of values and cognition was once again problematic.

Contrary to Schmidt's allegations, I am concerned by the issues this raises out of a desire to find some ground for a political practice that is not willfully decisionist, and not from a need to contemplate history from some Olympian vantage point. It is not merely an academic game to ask how one justifies the values and concepts that motivate and help us articulate political action. Lukács' expressive totality was one answer to the crisis exemplified by Max Weber's melancholy reflections on the arbitrariness of political goals. Ultimately, as the Frankfurt School clearly saw, it was bankrupt. A more recent attempt has been made by Althusser, whose scientism is even less convincing. The Frankfurt School has had the integrity to face the failure

24. "Authoritarian State," p. 11. There is another sentence in this essay that expresses an epistemology (but not a politics) that Lukács would have endorsed: "The theoretical conception which, following its first trailblazers, will show the new society its way—the system of workers' councils—grows out of *praxis*" (p. 10). But this is only an isolated incident in Horkheimer's corpus, where *praxis* was seen until the post-war period as verification for theory, not its stimulus. Still, it shows the extent to which the early Frankfurt School took *praxis* seriously, contrary to Jacoby's claim that it always maintained that theory was itself the only *praxis*.

25. Schmidt's refusal to confront the development in the Frankfurt School's position is demonstrated in the gleeful way he seizes upon my having missed the fact that an earlier version of the essay Adorno published in 1953 was written in 1937. He is correct in chastising me for having neglected to examine the German original of *Prisms*, where this information is given. In the *Aufklärung* issue, where the initial publication took place, and in the English translation, no mention is made of the earlier composition date. The English is especially misleading in this regard, because the essay begins "The sociology of knowledge expounded by Karl Mannheim has begun to take hold in Germany again.... These considerations may justify returning to one of Mannheim's older books, *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*" (a book published in 1940). Clearly, this was written in the 1950s, when Adorno decided to publish the essay, but I accept Schmidt's contention that the body of the essay represents Adorno's thinking in the late 1930s. But what does this tell us of the Frankfurt School's history? I suggest two things: 1) in the 1930s, there was considerable ambivalence about the relation between philosophy and *praxis*, which led both to the formulations expressed in this essay and to those, which were much more optimistic about the relation, in Horkheimer's *Zeitschrift* essays; 2) Adorno's ascendency within the Frankfurt School after the war led to a greater stress on the relative autonomy of philosophy from any social determination. One need only compare Horkheimer's *Zeitschrift* essays with *Negative Dialectics* to see what this shift has meant.

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of these and other solutions. But as Susan Buck-Morss has succinctly put it, Adorno's turn "towards non-identity may have revolutionized theory, it is not yet a theory for revolutionaries."[26] Schmidt's appeal to reflect on our "almost instinctual rejection of the tradition in which we first learned to think" may be compelling rhetoric, but it does not get us very far towards a more convincing alternative. I cannot pretend to have a better one, but I am not willing to assume that the Frankfurt School has either.

The confusion Schmidt manifests on this issue is clear when with one breath he accuses me of seeking a place outside the totality of history and then with another, argues for a Critical Theory "that does not ground itself in the future or in the present." The fact is that contrary to its earlier impulses, the Frankfurt School was forced to seek a transcendent position by its realization that society lacked an immanent, critical agent. Horkheimer's increasing fascination with religion, which was foreshadowed in essays from the thirties like "Montaigne und die Funktion der Skepsis,"[27] was one expression of this shift. That admirers of Critical Theory like Jacoby and Schmidt fail to account for this change on theoretical rather than *ad hominem* terms reveals their blinkered attitude towards the development of the School. A more recent and to my mind more fruitful response to this dilemma has been Habermas' attempt to spell out transcendental cognitive interests, which Schmidt cavalierly dismisses with innuendos.

Adorno's attempt to work his way out of the dilemma of a Hegelian Marxism with no faith in history is somewhat more complicated. In *Negative Dialectics*, he opts for an immanent method which rejects the need for any ontological underpinnings. But he combines this with an almost total pessimism about the historical possibilities inherent in the system he immanently explores. His friend Siegfried Kracauer saw the weakness of this approach: "His rejection of any ontological stipulation in favor of an infinite dialectics which penetrates all concrete things and entities seems inseparable from a certain arbitrariness, an absence of content and direction in these series of material evaluations. The concept of Utopia is then necessarily used by him in a purely formal way, as a borderline concept which at the end invariably emerges like a *deus ex machina*. But Utopian thought makes sense only if it assumes the form of a vision or intuition with a definite content of a sort. Therefore the radical immanence of the dialectical process will not do; some ontological fixations are needed to imbue it with significance and direction."[28] The problem of ontological fixations apart from history does not arise if one accepts a Hegelian position, for Hegel (and to an extent, Marx after him) was confident that history was the arena in which Reason was manifesting itself. But the Frankfurt School was not so sure. At times Schmidt acknowledges this, but elsewhere its significance eludes him. Thus he chastises me for failing to appreciate how the Frankfurt School can accuse Mannheim of being at once a relativist and an absolutist because I don't "grasp the full significance of the Hegelian notion of reason." Now, it is certainly true that at

26. Buck-Morss, "The Dialectic of T.W. Adorno," p. 144.

27. *Kritische Theorie*, vol. I; significantly, Horkheimer attacks liberal theology for fostering the scepticism that leads to fascism and has far more praise for the orthodox (p. 253). In "Zum Problem der Wahrheit," a similar point is made about Catholic counter-revolutionaries like de Maistre and Bonald, who are seen as deeper than the German critics of religion like Bauer and Feuerbach (p. 275). But it was not until the 1950s that Horkheimer's religious interests really took precedence over his political.

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times, the Frankfurt School relied on such a notion, at least implicitly. In "Zum Problem der Wahrheit," for example, Horkheimer argued against both sceptical relativism and dogmatic metaphysics by appealing to a dialectic historicizing truth in a very Hegelian manner.[29] But in the same essay, he stressed the extent to which a materialist dialectics differed from Hegel by remaining open-ended to continued historical change. And once again in their later work, the Hegelian assumption that history as a totality could be understood as the working out of Reason lost its support. Thus Adorno could write: "Universal history must be construed and denied.... No universal history leads from savagery to humanitarianism, but there is one leading from the slingshot to the megaton bomb.... It is the horror that verifies Hegel and stands him on his head. If he transfigured the totality of historic suffering into the positivity of the self-realizing absolute, the One and All that keeps rolling on to this day—with occasional breathing spells—would teleologically be the absolute of suffering."[30] The Hegelian answer to the antinomies of bourgeois life and thought was thus rejected by the later Frankfurt School. If Schmidt remains unconvinced, all I can do is suggest he read Horkheimer's essay on Schopenhauer [31] with an open mind.

This brings me to the final issue raised in Schmidt's critique: the appropriateness of Walter Benjamin's remarks on Klee's "Angelus Novus" as an expression of the Frankfurt School's position on the ground of true consciousness. Here he scores a valid point, as I was perhaps too hasty in seizing on Benjamin's image of the angel retreating into the future as comparable to the Frankfurt School's uneasy reliance on a future totalization as the Archimedean point of valid knowledge. Schmidt is correct in pointing out that the metaphor is essentially directed against evolutionary historicism and the belief in automatic progress that crippled the Second International theorists. And yet, I still think the image vividly captures a sense of the implicit vantage point from which the Frankfurt School's critique was made. What differentiated Critical Theory from the Orthodox Marxism of the Second International was their lack of confidence that such a future reconciliaton was inevitable. Schmidt is wrong to say that I miss this difference, which is obvious in everything that I have written on this subject. What I intended to say, and perhaps I wasn't as clear as I might have been, is that this future reconciliation was the epistemological fiction that gives Critical Theory its coherence. For there is no sense in talking about determinate negation without some positive telos as an implicit alternative; otherwise the result is nihilism. Perhaps it would be useful to compare this position with Althusser's notorious dictum that the economy is "determinant in the last

28. Kracauer, *History: the Last Things Before the Last* (New York, 1969), p. 201.

29. *Kritische Theorie*, vol. I, p. 236. Schmidt, however, is in error when he argues that the argument against Mannheim as both absolutist and relativist is equally persuasive. Mannheim was just as hostile to the notion of a "formal static truth which somehow stood behind all of the various perspectives," to use Schmidt's formula. The point of his relationism was that the truth was not static and immutable, but rather reflected a dynamic historical process. Like Lukács, he was still in the historicist tradition to the extent that truth was seen as temporally related, although, of course, he did not have the same appreciation of contradictions as Lukács. As Schmidt points out when discussing Benjamin, hostility to historicism was one of the key elements in the Frankfurt School position. That this hostility was in tension with the Hegelian residue in their position escapes him.

30. *Negative Dialectics*, p. 320.

31. "Schopenhauer Today," *The Critical Spirit: Essays in Honor of Herbert Marcuse*, ed. Kurt H. Wolff and Barrington Moore, Jr. (Boston, 1967).

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instance," but "the last instance never comes." The point of my conclusion is that I don't find this solution fully satisfying. And indeed from the point of view of the Critical Theory of the 1930s, it constitutes a position dangerously close to what Horkheimer dismissed as a "traditional theory." As Adorno acknowledged at the end of *Negative Dialectics,* "there is solidarity between such thinking and metaphysics at the time of its fall."[32]

That Schmidt himself would be unhappy with this position is evident from his awkward attempt to harness Benjamin for his own purposes. There is, of course, an inherent problem in relating Benjamin to the Frankfurt School, as I tried to say in my book, for there were serious tensions between them. Schmidt, however, fails to acknowledge them. Thus he quotes Benjamin's remark that "Not man or men but the struggling, oppressed class itself is the depository of historical knowledge,"[33] as if this somehow represented Frankfurt School thinking. Can Schmidt have read *Eclipse of Reason* or *Minima Moralia* and claim that these books endorse Benjamin's position? Similarly, can he ask us to believe that Benjamin's quasi-religious call for a redemption of the past is consonant with Critical Theory, when Horkheimer specifically denied the possibility of such a redemption in the 1930s, as Marcuse was to do in *Eros and Civilizaton?*[34]

Schmidt finishes by calling for a reflection on our own origins and impulses, rather than searching for new conceptual understanding in the manner of Habermas. There is much to be said for this, but can he really argue that the Frankfurt School's example leads him in this direction? Did its members ever seriously examine their personal situations in the way that he suggests? If I may be permitted one final irony, when I attempted to probe those origins in *The Dialectical Imagination,* it was Schmidt's authority Jacoby who castigated me for subjectivizing Critical Theory and thereby "belittling the objective nature of dialectical and critical thought."[35] Clearly, one can't win against those who need the Frankfurt School as a crutch and refuse to confront the dilemmas it failed to surmount. It is to the Frankfurt School's credit that unlike so many of its competitors it refused to countenance false solutions. Its legacy is thus not a body of sacred texts that can be plundered to manufacture a uniform and impregnable Critical Theory with answers for every question, but rather the imperative to think critically so that intellectual crutches will some day no longer be necessary.

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32. *Negative Dialectics,* p. 408.

33. "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations,* ed. with an intro. by Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, 1968), p. 260.

34. Horkheimer, "Gedanke zur Religion," *Kritische Theorie,* vol. I, p. 375; Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (London, 1969), p. 166.

35. Jacoby, "Marxism and the Critical School," p. 236.

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Illusions of Czech Socialist Democracy

by Ivan Svitak

The Prague Spring has been characterized as a national crisis, as a technocratic plan that failed, as an antibureaucratic revolution with a humanistic ideology, as a revolution from the top, as a revolt of the intellectuals, as a hasty improvisation, as a creeping counterrevolution, as a rebellion against Leninism, as a concrete utopia, as an ill-timed experiment, as a traffic accident of history, or —as a miracle.

The Prague Spring inaugurated the period of democratic revolutions in the "socialist" societies. It was the first phase of an extraordinary, historically important attempt for a socialist revolution of a new type in the spirit of European Marxist humanism. The attempt failed because (1) the political representatives of reformist communism did not dare to combine democratization with the spontaneous mass movement and, in the critical situations, were not able to transcend the technocratic-bureaucratic nature of reform or to defend the country militarily; (2) the intellectuals failed to achieve an effective unity of action of the working class with the intelligentsia; (3) the mass illusions about the nature and the actual historical role of the prominent representatives of the Communist Party (including the national heroes) made it impossible to see through the fraudulent game of democratization as conceived by the apparatus of the KSC (Communist Party of Czechoslovakia), and to replace it by socialist democracy opposing precisely that political elite which again and again tried to block the democratization. Just as new wars start where the previous ones stopped, new revolutions always resume where the previous ones have collapsed. The fundamental problem of the Czechoslovak future is the liquidation of the collaborationist, neo-Stalinist-neofascist regime, the carrying out of a democratic revolution under the conditions of the "socialist" ownership of the means of production, the implementation of socialist democracy as a political alliance of the working class and intelligentsia against the power elite of the post-occupation collaborators. The future of Czechoslovakia is predetermined by the necessity to carry out a democratic, socialist revolution which will result in a structural change of the economic system, political regime and the scope of human rights. This democratic, socialist revolution can assume the form of a transformed process substantially different from previous revolutions. It will certainly exceed the boundaries of the East European countries, and will most likely be stimulated by the unavoidable economic reforms in the Soviet Union.

Although this prospect may seem neither realistic nor acceptable to many people, a philosopher has only one duty: to think and act in the spirit of perceived truth. As soon as we cease to burn with indignation over the Soviet occupation, we must search for the basic sources of those errors which led the Prague Spring into a blind alley. With a superficially empirical approach to politics it may very well seem that, if certain persons had acted differently, the final outcome would have been different. Although such a hypothesis contains a grain of trivial truth, it cannot be verified. A historical approach, on the other hand, makes it clear that the sources of the failure lay in some elementary mistakes which were deeply rooted in the past, in theory and

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practice, and which predetermined the direction and the nature of political events. There were at least three mistakes—let us call them the illusions of the Prague Spring—which concern the most important phenomena of democratization: economic reforms, socialist democracy, and the Czech culture of the 1960s. To put it more accurately, economic reform, socialist democracy and the program of cultural freedom were acceptable postulates which corresponded to the wish of the majority of the nation. Alas, these reformist goals of democratization were theoretically conceived, politically implemented and ideologically defended within the framework of the post-Stalinist ideology and practice which was and is based on the political, economic and cultural monopoly of the KSC apparatus and its bureaucratic power elite. Insofar as this post-Stalinist ideology and practice was only to be modified and not to be completely abandoned (and renouncing the monopoly of power as the primary role of the party was a sacreligious idea even for Smrkovsky and Goldstücker) then this rational program of reforms became an absolute impossibility, a pure illusion, an attempt to square the circle. To separate the illusive and realistic features in the democratization practice of the Prague Spring is the most important task on which the very formulation of future prospects will depend. Briefly, the economic reform was a realistic possiblity, but the expectation, on the other hand, that the market economy could be combined with the technocratic-bureaucratic system was an illusion; socialist democracy represented a potential alternative change, but it was illusive to assume that the attributes of the power monopoly of the party could be preserved at the same time; the freedom of culture almost became a reality, but it was illusory to believe that the terrorists of the apparatus trained in the Stalinist spirit could be re-educated by the reading of *Literarni listy*, and would become enthusiastic about somnambulistic humanism in full blossom.

The inconsistency of the program's goals and their practical implementation was not apparent at the outset; it looked as if the rigid orthodoxy would be fully acceptable to the stubborn hardliners both in the Kremlin and at the Hradschin castle in Prague. The economic reform and democratization were formulated in the Action Program (April 1968) in such weak terms as the new leadership wanted to implement them—namely as the Gromulka-ite concession to the economic crisis which would be followed by further tightening as soon as the apparatus overcame the crisis. It was simply a trap of a hundred flowers, nothing new. The force of the spontaneous movement, however, forced the KSC leadership to make much more far-reaching concessions. As a result, most people thought that it was the Communist Party which embodied the program of prosperity, socialist democracy, sovereignty and individual liberty. This impression, however, is not at all supported by the resolutions of the Communist Party either prior to the occupation or after (the critical night of August 21, 1968 was an exception). It is necessary to say that the radical political program originated outside the Communist Party, independently of its policy and in opposition to it. Husak, Bilak, Indra and other collaborators of the Soviet occupation regime are perfectly right when they say today: "the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia indeed never stained its shield by the advocacy of the workers' councils, socialist democracy and individual liberty." It did not. The brief and tactically motivated flirtation with democracy must not be taken seriously. In fact, the compromising resolutions were gradually annulled because the totalitarian apparatus of the dictatorship is consistent precisely when it organizes

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repression and not when it flirts with human rights. The program of the workers' councils, socialist democracy, sovereignty and freedom has never constituted the policy of the apparatus of the Communist Party, and has never been advocated or formulated as such. On the contrary, it was the impetuous manifestation of a tremendous mass, unorganized, and spontaneous protest movement which had been defended by the prominent representatives of the Czech and Slovak intelligentsia—among whom were many communists but no apparatchiks. The Communist Party as a bureaucratic apparatus, as an institution of repression, terror, and occupation, has never incarnated the ideas of the Prague Spring because these ideas were alien to it and sprang precisely from the opposition to its power monopoly. On the contrary, the Communist Party and its apparatus, including the temporary national heroes, bear full responsibility for the transformation of the great national program of "socialism with a human face" into the pasquinade of "socialism with goose pimples." The Communist Party and its revisionist spokesmen also bear full responsibility for those fundamental errors which transformed the realistic values and possibilities into the lost illusions of the Prague Spring.

Today, it may seem that the democratization program had been politically unpremeditated and that the Communist Party and its apparatus were upset by this process. It is a fact, however, that democratization had been very thoroughly prepared during the last years of the Novotny regime. If the actual development had indeed caught the democratizers unprepared, it was not because the democratization was improvised, but because it proceeded absolutely from the wrong premises. The key step in the new direction was the establishment of special commissions at the KSC Central Committee (1966) which consisted of reliable experts. The underlying idea of these commissions was to render more effective control by the party apparatus through a body consisting of apparatchiks and technocratic experts. Although the experts and the apparatus bore equal political responsibility, there was no doubt who was to blame if the intended reforms were to fail. While the apparatus retained strict control, the technocrats moaning at the economic difficulties suddenly felt that something could be done to improve the situation. Whenever they proposed more energetic measures, however, Novotny warned them that he would never allow his best cadres to be liquidated under any pretext. Consequently, the reformist enthusiasm has waned.

Parallel to these central commissions of the party were three principal teams—of O. Sik, R. Richta and Z. Mlynar—which were established in the Economics, Law and Philosophy Institutes of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, respectively. In these enclaves of relative academic freedom the contours of the bureaucratic-technocratic reform were born, which were to be subsequently summarized in the Action Program (1968). Among the three collective works produced by these teams the most important was the book by Ota Sik which summed up the results of the economic team's work in a well-conceived conception of market economy. The philosophical team headed by Radovan Richta combined technocartic views (of which no capitalist would be ashamed) with Leninist social doctrine, and thus created an eclectic concoction which was presented to the world as a solution to the problems of a civilization at the crossroads. Finally, the third team offered a successful platform for catapulting the leader of the team not only into the Politbureau of the KSC, but also back into entomology, which certainly represented a unique career in the history of

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political theories. The godfathers of these teams—j. Jendrych and V. Koucky—knew exactly what they were doing, while the members of the teams and the authors of "completely new conceptions" succumbed to the illusion that they could really affect basic political decisions. Such an illusion was indeed culpable and ridiculous at the same time. Instead of analyzing the actual historical process, these teams speculated on the ideological eventualities and produced precisely what Marx called the ideology of false consciousness or the illusion of the epoch. Instead of pertinent evaluations of power and social and economic relationships, they produced abstract, programmatic statements of a moral, political or philosophical nature, never even attempting to ascertain the causes of the deepening crisis which eliminated Novotny, the teams, Dubcek, and the revisionist ideology, all at the same time.

The Three Illusions

Illusion No. 1: "Market Socialism."—The first illusion was the conception of a technocratic reform of planned economy, introducing market relations among the enterprises but definitely not including the autonomy of the producers. In theoretical terms, market socialism is a contradiction within the framework of Marxism: the market principle contradicts the fundamental postulate of planned economy, because the central state plan is subjected to the market laws and to enterprise profit. Marxist socialism, and still less Soviet practice, has never been primarily conceived as a market economy, as a system of commodity exchange on the market, but on the contrary as a society which aims at the direct satisfaction of social needs without the market—in other words, as a society which does not produce exchange values (marketable goods), but rather utility values. Not only the extreme dogmatists of the Soviet type, but also the orthodox Marxists of the Western and Chinese Left thought that Sik's project paved the way to capitalist market relations. In fact, however, Sik's system offered a salutary technocratic solution to the contemporary economic difficulties. Although it was inspired by Yugoslav concessions to economic cooperation with the West, the most valuable feature of the Yugoslav innovations—the idea of workers' councils—was somewhere lost. As a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Sik knew quite well how far he could go without risk, and thus presented his revision as the improvement of an otherwise correct system and as a method toward higher efficiency. At the same time, he avoided the key question—an attempt to analyze the class nature of the regime from the Marxist standpoint—although the crux of the matter lay precisely there. The natue of the economic crisis in the East Europian regimes was brilliantly described by Kuron and Modzelewski as the crisis of monopoly socialism two years before the tumor protruded with full force in Prague.

Sik's empirically realistic program of technocratic change contained certain theoretical inconsistencies. The basic economic categories such as commodity, value, money, and labor, which Marx regarded as historically temporary concepts of the capitalist epoch, were conceived in in each Libermanism as timeless categories which only change their function under socialism. Karl Marx's economic theory is thus radical deradicalized, in a way similar to which Marx's classical idea of the withering away of the state was vigorously done away with under Stalin (and the state became an instrument of Stalin's disastrous counterrevolution from the top). Marx's vision of the future, socialist society has thus been reduced to increased consumption

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under the conditions of the state bureaucratic monopoly which is a total debacle of the humanistic spirit of the socialist revolution. The Czech reformist economists could not practically acknowledge the exploitive nature of the production system and could not proceed from Marx's original humanistic program which clearly did away with the fetishism of commodities and with the market of exchange values. Moreover, they were not able to go another step beyond the fetishism of commodities and to grasp the fetishism of power.

In the systems of totalitarian dictatorships the fetishism of commodities persisted in the new form, perfected by exploitation, repression and by the mass non-economic compulsion which multiplied the defects of capitalism a hundredfold. Naturally, no study which vaguely touched upon the class stratification and its economic roots, in other words a study which would deal even indirectly with these questions of the fetishism of power as the key theoretical problem, could be published because it was branded Trotskyite before it saw the light of day. The entire reformist program was thus limited to a technocratic improvement of the existing system, and the economic reform was unable to set high goals for itself. If the purpose of "market socialism" is to increase consumption alone, then it is preferable to take Ford rather than Marx as a model.

Illusion No. 2: Detotalization of Totality.—The second fundamental illusion of the Prague Spring, the illusion about the possibility of reforming the totalitarian dictatorship, lay in the utopian conviction that the power monopoly of the totalitarian dictatorship could be democratized at all. Although it sounds absurd today, from the documents prepared by the teams and from the politically vague promises of the Action Program, it seems that the political leaders of democratization indeed believed that it was possible to preserve the attributes of the power monopoly of the party, to put the economy on a more sound basis, and to democratize the political life at the same time. The old political foxes, both the Western democrats and dogmatists in the Kremlin and in Prague alike, had to view these efforts with detachment and distrust. They could not understand how the Czechoslovak National Front, reconstructed for the second time, could fulfill the aspirations for citizens' participation in politics without granting civil and human rights to the very same citizens. The institution of the National Front which had been safely dead for twenty years, this mummy consisting of fictitious political parties and not at all fictitious totalitarian institutions, was suddenly expected to channel the protest movement and cultivate the first sprouts of socialist democracy. Except for the experts participating in the teams, no one in his right mind could believe in the chimeras of the "oponentura" (a procedure in which the candidate for a scientific degree defends his thesis) which raised this stupid procedure in the Academy of Sciences to the central principle of the country's political life. The mounting waves of socialist democracy after March, however, could no longer be squeezed into any political system which wanted to preserve, in undiluted form, the decision-making by the elite and its power monopoly. While socialist democracy was a living reality in spring, summer and even in fall 1968, the second technocratic illusion lay in the expectation that the dynamism of history could be controlled from the top within the limits of the old elite system. Technocratic bureaucracy has never respected, nor will it ever respect, the inherent civil rights; it was only willing to grant new privileges or to restrict the existing privileges of the ruling circles without,

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however, recognizing the people as the source of power and law in the state. Monopoly elitism is incompatible with civic and human rights, and must always fail in the end. Never and nowhere did the leaders of democratization overstep the horizon of their own superstition that they were a priori entitled to rule. Nor did they give up hope that they could, after the model of the "good Soldier Schweik," muddle through history.

The experts around Dubcek discovered America for the second time when they found that the division of power constituted the precondition of democracy and that political power had to be at least decentralized among the leading party, the state and organs of autonomy. As it was some time ago under Krushchev, Stalinism was again rejected on superficial utilitarian grounds. Neither in Moscow in 1956 nor in Prague in 1968 could the protagonists of the new model admit the eclectic nature of the changes proposed by them. It is incredible how blind they were to the elementary fact that politics is an applied theory of class struggle, the theory of conflict of interest and not simply a technical manipulation of the apathetic masses which fooled them precisely by having ceased to be apathetic. What politically paralyzed the Prague reformists was the conviction that—after half a century of the hegemony of Stalinsm—they could be guided in politics by the authentic Marx. Moreover, they seriously believed that they indeed followed the authentic Marx, while they only drew on incompatible ideologies trying to eliminate the Stalinist deformations through a combination of Leninism and Masaryk's tenets. The reformists never managed to make the crucial decision: either to seriously adopt Marx's authentic program of revolutionary humanism, to risk a revolution and the defense of the country, or to openly declare that they were reverting to social democratic conceptions.

Illusion No. 3: "Open Marxism".—The third principal technocratic illusion was the theoretical chimera of open Marxism which achieved embarrassing triumphs particularly in philosophy. Open Marxism in fact combined the theory of Marx with everything possible—with sociology, psychoanalysis, existentialism, phenomenology, cybernetics, Jesus Christ and Francoise Sagan. The purpose of this endeavor was to demonstrate that Marxism could incorporate the achievements of contemporary science and philosophy without losing its very essence, that it was a system open to changes in exactly the same manner as every science is. This eclectic illusion was a simple-minded attempt to transplant Sartre's existentialized Marxism to Eastern Europe. Open Marxism was and is an eclectic ideology which dominated Narodni Trida (the principal thoroughfare of Prague) where the bestsellers of Simone de Beauvoir overshadowed Marx's works in the 1960s as effectively as did Babayev's and Drda's works some time earlier. Although the presentation of Western science, philosophy and even of Western fashions with a Marxian twist undermined the information monopoly of the Party apparatus and blunted the official hostility toward Western art and literature, the Stalinist ideology was only replaced by another ideology of the bureaucratic elite and was not overcome by a scientific observation of reality. He who maintains that Stalinism is the negation of Marx's humanism is right, but he still remains captive of the ideology of the nineteenth century, if he wants to return to Marx.

So long as the Czech intellectuals could not or were not able to intellectually reproduce reality itself, any combination of original Marxian humanism with the subsequent (philosopical) movements remained an eclectic mishmash of various

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views. The revisionist search for authentic Marxism represents a continuation of orthodoxy under the illusion that orthodoxy has been defied. The ideological categories (of philosophy, politics, religion) survive the political systems under which they came into being, as Hegelianism survived the Prussian state. Likewise, Marx's categories survived the nineteenth century of class conflict and thus became an ideology—and not the true reflection of the social situation in the industrialized countries. The reformists believed more in the consistency of the ideological system propounded by the founder of Marxism than in the indisputable fact that the USSR had for a long time been interested not in the implementation of Marx's ideas, but in the promotion of its power interests and nothing else. How surprised the main ideologists of socialism with a human face must have been, when Brezhnev, in response to Czech "theoretical" explanations of socialism, stated: "Prosto, Vy nashi a my vas nepustim!" (To put it briefly, you are ours and we shall not let you go.) Open Marxism is an ideological chimera which strives to achieve the impossible, namely the denythologization of Stalin's mythologization of Marxism. It is an attempt to revise the terms, but not the social reality, by purely intellectual manipulations, by "the nonrepresentative myths" (as Lévi-Strauss puts it). As interpreted by the Prague reformists, the doctrine of open Marxism was an ideological revision of Stalinism. As such it belongs to history. The ideology of socialism with a human face—not the actual popular movement for socialist democracy—was a synthesis of illusions of the intellectuals who, as members of the ruling technocratic-bureaucratic elite, were not able to see in themselves an integral part of the repressive totalitarian system. They were not able to identify themselves with the popular masses.

Czech Culture

While revisionist ideas became increasingly evident in Czechoslovak politics after 1956, a similar tendency in culture asserted itself as the retreat from socialist realism and partyness in art. In the culture of the fifties, socialist realism and class criteria reigned supreme; the protagonists of "proletarian" or people's culture as well as their silenced opponents judged themselves and their work in more or less clear class or political contexts. The fronts were solid, delineated, clear and unequivocal. This class determination of culture was considerably weakened by the conflict between revisionism and dogmatism toward the end of the fifties, when the basic mark of division—the "proletarian" and the "bourgeois" culture—was overshadowed by a controversy *within* the new ruling culture. The ideological revisionists were definitely more tolerant than the dogmatists, but both these tendencies, revisionism as well as dogmatism, were the captives of Stalinism because neither of them would admit the Catholics, surrealists, liberals and existentialists into official culture. This atmosphere underwent a major change in the sixties: both the old apparatchiks and the young communist intellectuals ceased to think of themselves and their culture in class terms. An exception was "our papa" Novotny who occasionally reprimanded the intelligentsia for having failed to take a class approach. He thus became a universal laughing-stock because the change in the cultural climate could not be averted either by him or censorship or purges among the intellectuals. The regime was so rotten that it began to be afraid of the intellectuals.

The Czech culture of the sixties, as reflected in leading works, can be regarded as an integral part of the persistent, increasingly vigorous and open protest against the

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repressive regimentation of art—a development which was inaugurated by the philosophical discussion (1956), by the so-called "poetry of everyday life," J. Skvorecky's *The Cowards*, and new literary criticism. It continued with the rebellion of abstractivists in the visual arts, in the experimental theatres, music and film, and culminated in the new novel, television commentaries and in an open revolt of the intellectuals against the cultural policy of the Communist Party. The Czech culture of the sixties brushed aside the original antagonism between dogmatism and revisionism, and in its best works was represented by the non-communists. A continuous flow of open protests increasingly involved broader strata of the general public. While the artists' associations as the transmission belts of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia were the principal centers of party policy, the artists as a social layer of the intelligentsia could not be tamed any more merely by the advantages ensuing from membership in the Association, trips abroad and so-called literary loans as the transmission levers of corruption. The intellectuals were ready for a revolt. When the revolt really came (1968) the fundamental differences within the Czech culture could not be openly stated, because they would have undermined the common course of action against the party control. The group around *Literarni listy* (with A. J. Liehm as a leading spirit) and its exponents in the Association of Writers completely dominated the leadership of democratization campaigns in the area of cultural policy. Although most of them were reformist communists, they suddenly, de facto and overnight, became the representatives of that non-communist trend which in a small-scale cultural guerrilla war had defended the fundamental humanistic values and cultural freedom for more than ten years. This was a bizarre turn indeed. It may appear puzzling that it was the communist intellectuals who became the foremost reformers without feeling the discrepancy between their earlier and later attitudes, without questioning their own class consciousness, without realizing the transformation of their roles and the diversity of principles employed in 1948 and 1968, respectively. Why?

The dialecticians like paradoxes. Czech intellectuals were not capable of sacrificing their entire personalities to the party because they felt close to the romantic idols of alienation, dialectics and revolution, and because they were inceasingly appalled by the stereotyped lies which each mass ideology employs. Finally, the mission of the intellectual, beginning with the Greek philosophers, has been to corrupt the youth—a mission which each intellectual has been consciously performing since the time of Socrates. The very social status of the artist, scientist, journalist thus created favorable conditions for a reform of the ideology; that seeming paradox between the changed attitudes therefore need not surprise us. To these general features of the intellectual's role in the mass movement against totalitarian dictatorship, however, we must add one more specifically Czech illusion which was almost universally shared by the middle generation of communists and which was summarized by a prominent Czech author in this way: "Stalinism is the heir of the great humanistic movement." He who possesses even a sketchy knowledge of history, however, knows that Stalinism was the most brutal denial of any humanism. Indeed, the scope of Stalin's massacres manages even to overshadow the barbarism of Hitler. To regard Stalinism as the heir of humanism is therefore absurd. It is doubly absurd because this myth, or rather flagrant ideological fraud, was not perceived in Czechoslovakia even by the prominent representatives of reformist communism at the

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rebellious writers' congress. Unfortunately, this undetected fraud became the central cultural idea of reformist communism and conflicted both with the art program of independent cultural groups and the actual practice of the non-communists. The cultural policy of reformist communism, therefore, was not the expression of cultural values and goals of independent groups which made Czech art flourish so uniquely in the sixties, but only a variant of Stalinism which rapidly perished of its own inherent inconsistencies. What conclusions can be drawn from this cultural development?

1. With due respect and occasional admiration for the works of Milan Kundera, Antonin Liehm, Jaroslav Putik, Ludvik Vaculik and other literary representatives of reformist communism, we must state that the Czech literature of the sixties did not reflect the idea of reformist communism, but a democratic opposition to the totalitarian dictatorship by independent groups. The true intellectual leaders were non-communist intelligentsia and the most powerful personalities: Vratislav Effenberger in literary criticism; Vaclav Havel and Jan Werich in drama; Jiri Kolar, Jaroslav Seifer, Vladimir Holan in poetry; and Josef Skvorecky in the novel. Independent intellectuals (not the temporarily reforming communists) made the Czech culture great in the sixties by promoting that organic growth of values which a totalitarian dictatorship always and everywhere hinders, no matter whether it happens to be momentarily condescending or aggressive.

2.The cultural policy of "socialism with a human face" was the romanticism of communist intellectuals and was incompatible with the real world of tank divisions. The employment of tank divisions against cultural works is not rational, but is effective. Forms of political behavior must always be adequate to the subjects over whom the political influence is to be exercised. The Czechoslovak communist intellectuals failed to give guidance at the decisive moment, and no matter how we appreciate their art production, the Prague Spring meant their defeat. It also meant that the tremendously growing social weight of the non-communist intelligentsia and of the middle classes might give birth to political leaders in the future. Will they master the technology of politics at least to such an extent that they will not lose the decisive battle next time?

3. Romanticism in politics is a sure way to defeat. Hölderlin, a romantic poet of the last century, once yearned for the banner under which he could shed his blood honorably, even in a hopeless battle like Thermopylae. The reformist communists from the literary clubs hoisted the banner and the Soviet tanks provided Thermopylae. The blood that was shed, however, was not the blood of the reformists. Who were the romantics who were not willing to shed *their own* blood for their illusions?

Last Illusions

The most demonic category in philosophy is time, which devours not only its own children, but also entire nations and states. Time is the decisive factor in politics because bad timing may foil even the most ingenious plan. For this reason, time is often "bought" in politics only in order to delay action until a more appropriate domestic or foreign constellation obtains. It makes sense, however, for a politician to buy time only if time works in his favor and not against him. A sequence of post-August capitulations of the Czechoslovak government under Soviet pressure generated new illusions that the Soviet troops would either depart from the occupied country, or be

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forced to depart by an overthrow in the Kremlin, the international communist movement or simply by a miracle. Not only the government, but also the reformist communist leaders cherished the illusion that it was possible, even after the occupation, to continue to implement the political line of democratization. It is obvious today that the series of capitulations between August 1968 and April 1969 did not save any of the democratic liberties. On the contrary, the tactics of gradual concessions to Russian pressure made the occupation "acceptable"—to be sure not in the mind, but in the actual living reality—to the same citizens who would have never believed during that fateful week in August that their national heroes, Svoboda and Dubcek, would affix their signatures to the death sentence of the independence of the Czechoslovak state—as they in fact did. During the subsequent months, the government complied with all Russian terms which the intervention had intended to impose. Moreover, the government "voluntarily" did the same thing which a group of collaborationists would have been obliged to do "by force." Where was the rationale for buying time, if the politicians, constantly breaking the people's resistance, were in fact postponing their own suicide? The series of capitulations came to an end when it became possible for the open collaborationists to assume actual power. Dubcek's and Cernik's government helped them to hop into the saddle and facilitated their task. If time works against him who buys it, the time gain amounts only to the postponement of defeat. The gradual capitulations did not save the remnants of the democratization program, but only undermined the resistance forces which were ready to support any actions against the capitulations. In three critical situations (October 1968, January 1969, and April 1969) the government stabbed a knife in their back and saved its positon by further concessions in the face of the people's anger. If somebody sees positive merits in Dubcek's and Cernik's government, which legalized an aggressive act, disregarded international law, introduced consorship and liquidated its own political program, then he evaluates the historical fact according to the same false criteria which make Hacha look like a great statesman and not Hitler's collaborationist.

Both before and after the invasion, most of the communists behaved as the entire nation did. This is as indisputable as the fact that the leadership of the Communist Party signed documents of capitulation on which Antonin Novotny would have never put his signature. Fifteen years of his government resulted in fewer unfavorable consequences for the Czechoslovak state than fifteen months of Dubcek's reforms. This is a sad truth which must be fought tooth and nail by everyone who shares reformist illusions about the Communist Party as a force capable of spearheading the democratization process. The Communist Party, however, is an institution in which not only the nation, but also its own members are excluded from actual decision-making. The Communist Party is the power apparatus of the dictatorship of the monopolistic bureaucracy, an independent repressive political force, and a historian must not confound the repressive apparatus anchored in the Constitution with the illusions which the members of this repressive apparatus entertain about themselves. The Communist Party as an institution was, is and will be incapable of carrying out the democratization program because the very structure of this institution is incompatible with democratization, despite the best intentions cherished by the representatives of this program. Despite everything they tried, under the pressure of non-communist masses to achieve the impossible, their attempt

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to square the circle remains only a splendid chapter in the history of surrealism, but does not alter the nature of the Communist Party as an elitist apparatus of repression which is a priori incapable of ruling in a democratic manner. The democratization movement was not born on the initiative of the Communist Party; it developed in opposition to its leadership and against its effort to slow down the people's activity. There is therefore no reason to give the Communist Party credit for something which it does not deserve credit for, and to take its democratic gestures seriously. The Communist Party cannot politically square the circle—not because it lacks competent politicians, but because it is impossible to square a circle. On the other hand, the Communist Party could carry out democratization if it meets the sole condition—namely, if it ceases to be the Communist Party, the militaristic organization by which the monopolistic bureaucracy represses and manipulates people without rights. In partnership with the Communist Party all democratization attempts are doomed to failure.

Neither before nor after the invasion did I comment on the personality of Alexander Dubcek because a screen of illusions, errors, untruths, and emotions made it impossible to tell the whole truth for the time being—which is all the more unacceptable, the more one sees in Dubcek that symbol of the democratization movement, which can only be Jan Palach. The symbol and the reality, the imagination and the facts merge in Dubcek's person so perfectly that even merciless criticism wavers in regard to this point—not because we were afraid to destroy another myth, but because this very myth is regarded as the last resort of resistance. The nation is bound to realize eventually that the Saint Wenceslaus of modern Czechoslovak history failed because of the limitations of the institution which he wanted to serve, that he was not capable of relying upon the people's will in a critical moment, and that he, because of his aversion to bloodshed, sacrificed his personal integrity and himself as a symbol of democratization. What appears today as Dubcek's heroic gesture of self-denial and self-sacrifice to insure the nation's survival will eventually be truly seen as the subjection to an official party discipline and as a demonstration of solidarity with the power elites of repressive systems. What appears as a personal tragedy ensues from the strict logic of the institution of the Party as a functionalized and depersonalized mechanism in which a personality is regarded as a *quantité négligeable*. Alexander Dubcek was, is, and will remain the exponent of the bureaucratic apparatus, a man of the power elite's crisis, a man of the institution, and for this reason he may also be regarded as its saint. We who do not have faith in the institutions and saints must frankly state that "a cultivated politician of human nobleness" should have never signed into law a martial law which could be applied against his own supporters. A man of the institution will willingly do that because the nation will forgive a saint for anything. An intellectual, however, must not share these national illusions. "If you see a giant, look first at the position of the sun because what you took for a giant may, after all, be only the shadow cast by a dwarf" (Novalis).

The ideological postulates of reformism collapsed as soon as false pretensions were confronted with the unfalsified reality of class conflicts. None of the teams set up in the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences nor any party commission strove for changes within the bureaucratic elite, socialist democracy and still less for the activization of masses. To give the commissions, teams or individual communists credit for the

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Prague Spring is absolutely out of place; the members of these teams only tried to ignore the fundamental tenets of Marxism on class conflicts. The naked power relations between the repressive apparatus and powerless massess constituted a taboo similar for the economic team as the fundamental human rights did for the political-legal team. To be sure, the recommendations offered by the teams did not represent a deliberate political fraud nor were they intentionally revisionist; they only reflected the necessity to improvise ideological solutions. They had nothing in common with the splendid idea of socialist democracy, workers' councils and freedom of the press. In the final analysis, the illusions did not arise because the members of the teams were not particularly clever—on the contrary, the teams had the best brains in the country at their disposal—but from the practical indispensability to produce an eclectic concoction still acceptable to the apparatus of the Party. The truth had to be camouflaged to such an extent that it appeared as the continuity of orthodox Marxism-Leninism, although Lenin's doctrine was openly revised. This antinomy of incompatible but politically comprehensible goals gave birth to the errors which claimed as their victims not only the leading revisionist intellectuals, but ultimately the entire nation as well.

The doctrine of open Marxism—this theoretical nucleus of socialism with a human face—was a pure ideological illusion of the epoch; it was a geographically predestined self-deception of East European communists who attempted to formulate, within the limits of the USSR's big power interests, an intelligent, humanistic version of original, authentic Marxism. Alas, these theories prevented their authors from fully grasping both the interests of East European countries and the problems of big power chauvinism of the USSR. The above doctrine formulated the theoretical conflicts on the highest plane of abstraction, but their authors were incapable of seeing the real problems and where they were and are—namely, as everyday police terror, as class narrow-mindedness of the bureaucratic elite, as direct interest of the apparatus in maintaining the status quo. These trivial problems which every normal person with common sense understands without any theory—as vividly as he perceives his teeth being hit with a fist—now appeared in a pseudo-theoretical philosophical robe, coded in a language especially designed for this purpose. The abstractions of "reason and conscience," which covered up incredible banalities, were necessary simply because it was not possible to state the whole truth about everything and because they had to look scientific before the inquiring eyes of the censor. This ideological make-up became absolutely worthless as soon as the spring rains washed it away and revealed the real human face—socialist democracy without witchcraft.

In the actual conflict between two or three world blocs it is not the problem of different interpretations which really matters, but the power relations between the classes, groups, nations and races. It was precisely the ideological reproduction of reality which Marx so sarcastically ridiculed, but which was offered as a remedy by the post-Stalinist Czech ideologists in their Action (or rather Auction) Program which in fact was an auction of Marx's economic and political principles. Open Marxism—this Sartrian chimera which appeared on the banks of the river Vltava in the 1960s—did not promote any intellectual progress. It only attracted to the banks of the Vltava the Cossacks' motorized horses and thus mocked Libuse's famous prophecy that "the situation in Bohemia will not improve until the Cossack's horses

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drink water from the Vlatava." Moreover, Karl Marx's much more gloomy vision was fulfilled: that if Europe itself would not carry out the socialist revolution, this revolution would have to be achieved with the injection of Kalmuchs' blood. Under the conditions of a totalitarian dictatorship and a police regime, every opposition, if it does not want to be destroyed, must be prepared for a revolution, and must carry it out and defend it with arms. There is no other alternative. Socialist democracy in Czechoslovakia may be brought about only by the democratic, socialist revolution, by the politically anti-totalitarian and anti-colonial revolution, by the mass movement for structural reforms which must involve all of Eastern Europe. Such a revolution must be fought by the entire nation as a manifestation of the nation's will. The Czechs cannot get their freedom from anybody because nobody can grant their freedom from the top. The crisis ensuing from the occupation can only be resolved by the socialist, democratic revolution. There is no other way out.

On Nicolaus "Introduction" to the Grundrisse

by Moishe Postone and Helmut Reinicke

By translating the extremely difficult text of the *Grundrisse*,[1] Martin Nicolaus has made an important political contribution. His lengthy introduction to it is an attempt to generate a more thorough immanent analysis of the corpus of Marx's critique of political economy. In this respect, the *Grundrisse* is of central importance for the reconstruction of Marxian thought. It lacks the tight logical structure of *Capital* but has a broader explicit scope which adds depth and richness to an understanding of the categorical unfolding of the critique of political economy. While it clearly puts to rest any theory of a rupture between Marx's early and later works, the *Grundrisse* also presents developments in his thought which render untenable an unmediated identification of the categories of the works of 1844-46 (*Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,* the "Theses on Feuerbach," *The German Ideology*) with those of *Capital*; that is, an interpretation of the categories of the early works as the "philosophical underpinnings" of the later "economic" categories. It was with the *Grundrisse* that Marx first developed the categories of his critique so that they imply a critical epistemology—a historical determination of the dialectic. The categories of the critique of political economy are self-reflexive forms within which the early categories are taken up and find their adequate determination.

This understanding of dialectic will serve as the basis for the critique of Nicolaus' concept of labor and proletariat. In the *Grundrisse*, the concrete overcoming of

1. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundation of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)*, translated by Martin Nicolaus (London, 1973). Numbers between parentheses refer to the introduction to this work.

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proletarian labor as a result of the increasing contradiction between objectified and living labor is presented as *the* essential moment in the overcoming of capitalism. This illuminates Marx's use of value as a critical category (value as a socially specific form of wealth under commodity production) and condemns any interpretation which freezes the categories on the logical level of commodity circulation. This not only undermines any view of the abolition of capitalism which posits a socialism based upon proletarian labor, but also refutes those Marx interpretations which present a concept of labor relegated only to the realization moments of the totality. The *Grundrisse* implies a much more historically dynamic analysis of the proletariat in its objective and subjective moments.

The major part of Nicolaus' exposition deals with Marx's critique of Hegel. The reconsideration of this problematic has been made inescapable by the *Grundrisse*, whose reception has undercut earlier interpretations by Della Volpe and Althusser in their opposition of a "scientific" mature Marx to an idealist Hegel—an opposition made, not surprisingly, during the period of postwar capitalist restoration, expansion, and stability. The *Grundrisse* has become known as this period has come to an end—but also when the revolt of the 1960s has largely subsided and when increasing numbers of young leftists turn to a traditional Marxist theory and practice whose inadequacies had already been practically demonstrated by the newer forms of struggle. Nicolaus' discussion of Marx's critique of Hegel unfortunately assumes its own epistemology—one which is contradicted by the Marxian critique itself.

Nicolaus begins with a characterization of Hegel's philosophy as simultaneously "dialectical, subversive as was Socrates' and idealist, mystical like a priest's" (p. 27). This separation and opposition of idealism and dialectic in Hegel—the former as irrational, 'mystical' and reactionary; the latter as rational and progressive—is false and has important theoretical and political implications. It should, however, be clear that Nicolaus is neither characterizing Hegel *in toto* as irrationalist nor attempting to develop an 'anti-Hegelian' Marxism. The point then is not to 'save' Hegel nor can a critique of Nicolaus be neatly packaged as the defense of a 'Hegelian' vs. an 'anti-Hegelian' Marxism, for Nicolaus does present a 'Hegelian' Marxism. The question is—of what sort?[2]

Nicolaus' understanding of Hegel is derived from the philosophical notebooks of Lenin. However, it is one thing to appropriate Hegel out of concrete political considerations, in Switzerland and Petrograd, during the first World War. It is something quite different to interpret Hegel from the standpoint of Lenin—abstracted from all later discussion—fifty years later, within a very different constellation of the class struggle. Nicolaus does the same thing in taking up Brecht's comparison of Hegel to Socrates and his emphasis on Hegel's accomodation to the political status quo—for Brecht's understanding of Hegel, until the later influence of Korsch, was indebted to the official debates of the Communist parties. It came out of a period in which Deborin transformed Hegel into a dialectician of Being and Stalin finalized that as catechism. However, Nicolaus goes still further: it would never have occurred to Brecht to call Hegel's philosophy "idealist, mystical like a

2. That there are significant differences among 'Hegelian' Marxisms is obvious and can, for example, be seen in the differences between Lukacs and Deborin and Bukharin. Cf. N. Bukharin and A. Deborin, *Kontroversen über dialektischen und mechanistischen Materialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1974).

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priest's." Our analysis of Nicolaus' Marxism, then, will begin with an examination of his characterization of idealism.

Idealism is described by Nicolaus as follows: Hegel denied the reality of sense perceptions, which led him to the incorrect conclusion that only the logical concepts worked up by the mind have any reality. Wishing to provide objective validity to his personal concepts, Hegel evicted them from his own mind and attributed them to the 'Mind.' "It was only a natural step from there to the thesis that this 'objective' but immaterial 'Subject' *governed* the development of the world...and that it was pleased thus to unfold and reveal itself over the course of the centuries. From this to God was no step at all; it left Hegel towards the end a philosopher-pope bestowing benedictions...on the temporal emperor" (p. 27).

Nicolaus treats idealism as a rather stupid, 'mystical,' reactionary form of thought.[3] He neither takes it seriously—no mention is made of problems of consciousness and reality, of subject and object—nor does he attempt to analyze Hegel's philosophy with reference to its historical and social context. Such a shallow approach makes a materialist interpretation of Hegel's thought impossible. It would be pointless to refute the stale old allegations which Nicolaus repeats against idealism —for example, the denial of sensual reality. As stated, this indicates a naïve lack of knowledge of the history of philosophy. Hegel, of course, was quite aware of the discussions of the Eleatics and Sophists. He also knew that you hurt yourself when you knock your foot against a rock.

As to Hegel's immediate political views—they were by no means as reactionary as Nicolaus would have it.[4] Contrary to Kant's securing of the (bourgeois) world of appearance, Hegel insisted upon the cognitive necessity that the world not be dissolved into its sensual manifoldness but rather that the "particular object," as Marx later said (in the *Vorarbeiten* for his Dissertation), exhibits a "particular logic" which must be grasped in order to understand the concrete manifoldness. It is precisely this moment of abstraction which is integrally necessary to the constitution of the concept of totality in Hegel and Marx. It enters the Marxian theory as social concept. This should be understood historically. Kant, as *Bürger* in the period of manufacture, could not get beyond the world as given, as it was assured by Newtonian physics. Hegel, faced with early industrialization, could think from the standpoint of production, which in his thought is encoded in the labor of the

3. As an aside, it should be noted that Nicolaus' notion of mysticism is itself rather limited and, at best, could be applied to the later Schelling who was brought to Berlin in order to counter the "dragonseed of Hegelian philosophy." To equate idealism with such a murky form of mysticism indicates, among other things, complete ignorance of the emancipatory forms of plebeian mysticism, in which tradition Hegel's philosophy understood itself. As Ernst Bloch (in *Thomas Münzer* and *Atheismus im Christentum*) and Hermay Ley (in *Zur Geschichte der Aufklärung und des Atheismus*) have shown, plebeian mysticism was, in spite of its reactionary misuse, a forerunner of the proletarian movement. It expressed the emancipatory movement of the lower classes at the time of the early development of the capitalist relations and the liberation struggles against the nobility. The primitive communistic thought of mysticism, from Paracelsus, Jakob Böhme and Thomas Münzer, eneterd into the beginnings of the proletarian movement in many ways. Hegel's thought, as mediated through Swabian Pietism, stands in this emancipatory tradition.

4. Cf. the newly published edition of the original version of Hegel's *Vorlesungen über Rechtsphilosophie* (Stuttgart, 1973), written before the reactionary Karlsbad decrees of 1819. Also, cf. J. D'Hondt, *Hegel Secret,* and *Hegel en son temps,* among others.

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Concept. Behind this lies the bourgeois concept of labor—a transhistorical category underlying concrete social appearance. In spite of the ridicule which Nicolaus heaps on the 'objective' but immaterial 'Subject' it is, therefore, no stupidity when Hegel considers the reality of the world as abstract and thus presents this abstractness by means of categories which appear to have their own life.

This "abstractness" is rooted in the material world. Engels, upon whose understanding of dialectic Nicolaus bases himself, knew that Hegel's thought was more concretely rooted than that of many later Left-Hegelians, and warned against any easy interpretation of idealism as the drowning of everything concrete: "Anyone who is only somewhat familiar with Hegel should know that he knowingly presented hundreds of points from nature and history as the most striking instances of dialectical laws."[5] That Nicolaus presents such a shallow interpretation of Hegel's idealism which has little in common with the Marxian project, reflects back on his interpretation of Marx.

According to Nicolaus, Marx's critique of Hegel had two major logical phases (p. 33). He associates the first, which occurred in the early 1840s, with Feuerbach's method of inverting Hegel's subject and object and locating the subject in the social interactions of people. Nicolaus does not adequately deal with Marx's first critique of Hegel insofar as he does not sufficiently distinguish Marx's historical materialism from Feuerbach's anthropological materialism. Whereas in the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1843), Marx still proceeds in the Feuerbachian manner of inverting subject and object, in the *Paris Manuscripts* of 1844 one already finds a historical materialist interpretation of Hegel. Marx shows that the movement of the Concept in Hegel is due to the progress of humanity as a result of labor. The history-making activity of people makes history. Hegel metaphysicized the concept of labor as the labor of the Concept alone: its labor, that of the *Weltgeist*, gives rise to history.

Marx's interpretation indicates the degree to which Hegel was already in the position to reproduce the movement of history; as he noted, Hegel was located on the heights of classical economy. However, this analysis by Marx—that Hegel attempted to describe the totality of bourgeois society by means of labor—does not suffice to fully criticize Hegel's method and system. It remains historically indeterminate and does not fully explain why it was that Hegel metaphysicized labor. The fully adequate critique of Hegel was first achieved—implicitly—in *Capital*. It is there that Hegel's concepts are exhibited in their development—not because Hegel proceeded in this way but, rather, because the course of the bourgeois development of society by means of commodities, abstract labor, surplus value, etc., gives rise to this form: the representation of abstractions. The categories of the critique of political economy, the progression of the categories in *Capital*, present the subsumption of the concrete under the abstract, the relations of people with one another and with nature under commodity and capital.

In the *Logic*, Hegel presented the relation of essence and appearance which Marx concretized as the relation of production and circulation and as the result of abstract labor: circulation as "the phenomenon of a process taking place behind it." This is the materialist ground which makes it possible for Nicolaus to write that "the whole of the *Grundrisse* testifies to their [the 'services' rendered by Hegel's *Logic*] presence"

5. Friedrich Engels, *Dialektik der Natur* (Berlin, 1957), p. 54.

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(p. 26). The substance underlying the Hegelian concepts was materialistically explained by Marx in the *Paris Manuscripts* as the result of social development through labor. Capital development entered the early phases of real subsumption of labor; the proletariat began to arise, organize, and make knowable which class executes this labor—still, to be sure, as object of domination and exploitation. History proceeds not yet freely made but rather blindly, nature-like. This side lies behind Hegel's dialectical progress of the Concept. The "stripping off [of] the mystical shell from the rational core" (p. 34) could only have been carried out because Hegel's thought possessed a rational core—as idealist dialectic, and not simply as dialectic wrapped in 'idealist mysticism.'

In addition to the first stage of Marx's critique of Hegel—"the shift from the independent objective mind...and returning to it its native residence in the mortal human body"—Nicolaus distinguishes a second stage which he locates in the *Grundrisse*. In so doing, he draws attention to an extremely important development in Marx's thought—which, however, contradicts Nicolaus' own assumptions. He argues that Marx's Introduction to the *Grundrisse* was a false start; that the categories used were no more than immediate translations of Hegelian categories into materialist terms. For example, where Hegel begins his *Logic* with pure, indeterminate *being*, which then immediately calls forth its opposite, *nothing*, Marx begins his Introduction with *material production* (in general) which then calls forth its opposite, *consumption*. In the course of the Introduction Marx indicates his dissatisfaction with this starting point. However, it is only after having written the manuscript itself that Marx, in the section entitled "Value," begins anew with a different point of departure—that which is retained in *Towards a Critique of Political Economy* and *Capital*: the commodity (pp. 35-37).

Nicolaus points out this parallel, which indicated how Marx step-wise overcame the presentation of reality by Ricardo and Hegel until he finally worked behind the overreaching abstraction of the concept of money and discovered its underlying social form, the commodity. In the course of writing the *Grundrisse*, Marx finally discovered that structuring element with which *Capital*, and so the dialectical unfolding of the categories of the bourgeois system, should begin. From a trans-historical starting point, Marx moved to a historically determinate social form which expresses the key identity of identity and non-identity, use-value and exchange-value —a historically specific contradiction whose development involves all other contradictions of the capitalist mode of production.

Thus, Marx did not simply "materialistically" invert Hegel's dialectic. It is not that he merely swept away the heavens and posited materialism in its place, as Lenin lazily stated in his notes. Nicolaus himself says that the "mere substitution of a 'materialist' category (i.e., material production) for an idealist one (i.e., pure, indeterminate Being) leaves Marx still dissatisfied" (p. 35). As Nicolaus quotes him from the Introduction to the *Grundrisse*, Marx characterizes this inversion as the practice of 'socialist belletrists.' This characterizes 'prosaic economists,' but it is not the Marxian approach. The object of the Marxian analysis is bourgeois society, structured by wage-labor and capital and dominated by a determination of the mode of existence (*Existenzbestimmung*) whose dialectical unfolding—mediated by class struggle—presents this history in its purest, most classical form. This determination of existence is the commodity. With Marx, bourgeois society is for the first time

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posited *consciously*, and therefore critically, as Subject, in whose totality the categories move.

By choosing the commodity as the point of departure, Marx not only locates the proper object of the dialectic in the historically specific social form of commodity production, but also historically locates the dialectic itself. This self-reflection is a necessary consequence of the notion of adequacy of the concept to its object which is at the basis of both Hegel's and Marx's dialectics. What is rejected in starting with the commodity is a notion of dialectic as universally applicable method—or, in other words, as the adequate expression of an indeterminate reality whose essential nature is contradictory. Instead, dialectic is grasped as a critical concept which must now be seen as having arisen with the appearance of the commodity form and as being the only method adequate to a social form determined as a totality by commodity production (i.e., capitalist society) with its historically specific contradictions.

The Marxian dialectic, with its starting point in the commodity form, is therefore not only *expressive* of capitalist relations but, as opposed to Hegel's, *expresses* them self-consciously—as reflection on the social totality from the level of the becoming Subject; as a stage of a world becoming conscious through and for the Subject. The concept is made adequate to the thing by consciously reflecting it. But, in so doing, the 'method' necessarily renounces any pretensions to transhistorical validity. The adequacy of the concept to its object must imply, along with the historicity of the object—capitalist society—the historicity of the concept, the 'method,' itself. It is therefore in a double sense that Marx's dialectic must be understood as critique: rather than an opposition of true and false, which implies a static truth and a conceptual position outside of the thing, there is a critically immanent analysis of bourgeois society as social development, contradiction, negation—as time, as the history of capital development and class struggle. This is simultaneously the critique of social form and corresponding forms of thought. The Marxian dialectic presents a critical epistemology in which forms of thought are understood historically rather than as resulting from the interactions of indeterminate subjects and indeterminate objects outside of society and history. On the other hand, the Marxian critical epistemology cannot be reduced simply to interest, which derives action and thought from social position and does not examine the determinations of that 'social' within which the positions are located. In the critique of political economy, the various fetish forms define the social frame as it determines thought, within which further, more concrete, and class specific form differentiations can be made as the categories are logically unfolded. This moving immanence—the development of commodity, value, abstract labor, class struggle—is the source of the judgment that what is 'false' is the temporarily valid which considers itself permanent. The critique emerges from the thing itself, from the contradictions and limits which unfold from its motion—the presentation itself becomes critique and points to the negation of capitalist society. The dialectic is negative insofar as it theoretically negates the capitalist social form by a logically and historically immanent critique of that form.

But the critique has a second moment. Because the Marxian theory analyzes its own social context and history, whose specific contradictions give rise to the dialectic and whose presentation renders the dialectic materialist, the real negation by the proletariat of capitalist society must mean the negation of the dialectic itself. This is epistemologically self-consistent. One of the most powerful aspects of the critique of

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political economy is that it understands itself as historically determinate and can account for its existence as critique in the process of analyzing and criticizing bourgeois forms. Any attempt to transform it into a positive science falls into inconsistencies—for it is then posited as the historically unique exception, standing above the interaction of form and content, social forms and forms of consciousness, which it postulates as its own basis. As such, it would no longer be capable of understanding itself.

This is the case with every form of transhistorical dialectic, whether inclusive of nature (Engels) or not (Lukacs). In either case dialectic must be grounded ontologically—the one in Being in general, the other in social Being. However, that reality and/or social relations in general are essentially contradictory, can only be assumed, not explained. Dialectic as transhistorical totalizing category can only be dogmatically posited—at the cost of its own self-reflexive understanding.

The case is very different with the historically specific Marxian dialectic which is self-consciously rooted in the double character of social labor. Dialectic, as a central category of revolutionary Marxism, is itself a historical category which is not simply a mode of thought but rather grasps within itself a particular object: commodity producing society. It reflects the course of the contradictory epoch which rests upon the class antagonisms of wage-labor and capital and indicates the contradictory unfolding of this specific pre-history as it presents itself logically and historically. As a concept of the critique of political economy, dialectic denounces that blind movement associated with the concepts of commodity and capital. It is, above all, a critical category which understands and grasps its object from the aspect of the changeability of class relationships and points towards the end of the domination by commodity and capital and their human character masks. This historical determination of the dialectic does not imply a complete relativism such that the pre-capitalist past is unknowable. It does, however, undercut any teleological theory—whether in its deterministic or in its subjectivistic variant—and overcomes the antinomy of historical contingency and teleology.

The mature Marxian dialectic critically grasps and expresses developed bourgeois society as the first real social totality: one whose entire determinate reality can be unfolded logically from a single abstract structuring form—the commodity in its double character as total system. Because that dual character gives rise to contradictions which tend to unfold the form beyond itself—to money and then capital—as a constant dynamic in time, this first real social totality is the first historically dynamic form: as a *totality* it unfolds with time. This time, however, is not an empty Newtonian frame. Through the various determinations of time (labor time, circulation time, etc.) which Marx presents in *Capital*, he indicates that history is not constituted by an abstract time but rather is time made insofar as it is objectified. By preserving past knowledge and labor in objectified form and constantly moving beyond itself, capitalism constitutes time as historically concrete and made by people. History becomes more dense. The full awareness of this can lead to consciously made history. Finally, as a dynamic totality of a mediational character that gives rise to necessary forms of appearance which emerge, are abstracted from, and veil its essence, capitalist society presents its history as logic.

Earlier social formations are neither totalized nor historical in this sense. They possess dynamic elements and point beyond themselves only to the degree that their

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forms of surplus production possess elements of the commodity form. However, the commodity becomes a totalizing social form, a determination of the mode of existence, only with capitalist society. From the standpoint of capital-determined society, the logical development, commodity-money-capital, can be understood as historical. That is, for Marx the present is determined such that past development (given commodity development) can be understood as *logically* necessary—but only when viewed from this vantage point, retrospectively. The process of historical transformation from one social mode to another is to be seen as a progressively less random development with the rise and full development of the commodity form. Not, however, as the unfolding of an immanently necessary principle of motion. *Only capitalism—not the history of humanity—reveals a totalizing logic.* It is because this present is logically determined as a totality of a contradictory essence that it logically points beyond itself to the possibility of a future form, whose realization depends upon class struggle. The choice becomes socialism or barbarism —and this depends upon revolutionary practice.

The possibilities which increasingly emerge as immanent in the present are a function of that present, whose rise was by no means *a priori* necessary; they are not to be read back teleologically into the entire course of history. This is how the categories of the *Paris Manuscripts*, for example, should be read in light of Marx's later works. The historical determination of the dialectic points to a notion of history as the movement *from contingency to a necessity* which, in its increasing self-contradictions, allows for the possibility of freedom. The dialectic is not coextensive with the course of history but allows for its retrospective understanding. Any attempt to transhistoricize the dialectic, as was the case in the dominant tendencies within the Second and Third Internationals, falls behind this historical self-understanding and projects a determinate form of bourgeois society backwards and forwards in time. Because this form of transhistorical dialectic presents history as the result of quasi-natural causal laws, the subjective moment of the dialectic must drop out and the old contradiction of pre-Marxian materialism between an epistemology which views people as determined (causally) by their environment and a theory whose carriers are somehow above this condition is reintroduced.

However, the attacks on Diamat which attempt to save subjectivity by a one-sided emphasis on praxis are equally transhistorical and therefore inadequate. All too frequently Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach" have been used to construct an historically abstract epistemology based upon praxis—sensuous human activity as the appropriation of reality. This abstract epistemology can understand praxis only as fully conscious. It, therefore, tends to be teleological, is socially indeterminate and allows for no theory of historical *forms*, no social theory.

What is forgotten by the praxis orientation is that pre-capitalist social modes were not dynamic totalities and that history is not simply the passage of abstract time. Praxis is tied to objectification, but the dynamic historical principle—the commodity form—is alienated objectification. It is only in capitalist society that alienated objectification becomes totalized as a dynamic entity (capital as alienated Subject). Thus, people have made history—but *not* self-consciously. However, the contradictions of the totality give rise, in their unfolding, to the possibility of a newer form of consciousness which, on the basis of a history which people have made behind their own backs, *allows* for conscious historical praxis. To transhistoricize this

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possibility is to abandon the moment of alienation, of the logic; to anthropologize a historical condition and to remain bound to the other pole of a transhistorical antinomy of freedom and necessity. The commodity as point of departure allows for the overcoming of the problem of freedom and necessity, of subjectivism and determinism, as a dialectic of subject and object, as historical time—as the history of the rise, development and possible overcoming of the commodity and capital-determined social form.

In light of the above it is possible to begin to understand the connection of dialectic and idealism in Hegel and to adequately criticize Nicolaus' dismissal of idealism and his understanding of dialectic. A necessary mediation is Marx's concept of the fetish, which emerges from the category of abstract labor. On the one hand, in dealing with commodity-producing society, we are dealing with a contradictory and moving social reality. On the other hand, such a society is of a mediational form such that social labor exists in the double form of concrete and abstract labor and social relations are necessarily expressed in the relations among 'things.' They acquire a quasi-natural, objective form of appearance with its own 'laws.' On the level of capital, fetish reification becomes a moment of a process; it is set in motion according to the historical stage of capital development. Historical process does appear, but disguised in the phenomenal form of 'natural' process. As a result, that which is historically determinate takes on a 'natural' form, i.e., appears as historically indeterminate. As a characteristic of the form in which social objectivity appears, the fetish is simultaneously a determinant of social consciousness. The hallmark of bourgeois forms of thought (that is, those bound within the immediacy of the forms of appearance of the bourgeois mode of production) is that determinate capitalist forms are considered eternal or, at the very least, natural. All other forms are seen as unnatural or artificial: "...forms of social production that preceed the bourgeois form are treated by the bourgeoisie in much the same way as the Fathers of the Church treated pre-Christian religions."[6]

In this light Hegel's thought can be viewed as two-sided. With its notion of contradiction, it is expressive of the capitalist reality. Moreover, the concomitant notion of the moving interaction of subject and object as well as that of form and content in history—which implies the historicity of forms—has a critical edge, the "*taupe sous la terre*" (Marx): the overcoming of the standpoint of eternity which bourgeois concepts attempt to express. As such, it forms the springboard for the Marxian critique of bourgeois society. On the other hand, it remains within the bounds of bourgeois modes of thought, as analyzed by Marx, insofar as it does not self-consciously, from the standpoint of a historically-becoming revolutionary subject, consider its own relation to its historical context. Hegel's dialectic grasps, but does not get behind, the abstractions which are the necessary, real phenomenal forms of commodity- and capital-determined society. As a result, capital as subject of an alienated mode of production, which underlies Hegel's transhistorical Subject, is not grasped as such, and the historically specific *motion* of the forms, driven forward by their particular immanent contradictions, is posited transhistorically. That is, the *Weltgeist* is posited as Subject and the dialectic as the universal law of motion: History as the product of the labor of the Concept. The relationship of idealism and dialectic in Hegel should therefore be seen not as an accidental

6. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I (Moscow, 1962), p. 81.

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opposition but as expressive of the same thing: a dialectically grasped reality which presents itself as abstract because it is achieved as a result of abstract labor—of abstract bourgeois concepts. Hegel's dialectical idealism as Onto-Logic of bourgeois relations is therefore no "mere reflection" (p. 33), but rather, as Marx said, a determination of the mode of existence, just as are Ricardo's categories. However, they are bourgeois, immanent and not yet critical.

To accuse Hegel of mysticism in relation to Marx would be similar to blaming Socrates for not having been familiar with Hegel. Nicolaus tidies up history and orders theory neatly: Hegel had sent the independent objective Mind "floating into the heavens." Marx simply reverses things—a simple matter of method, solely of better thinking—and returns the Mind to its mortal human body (as if bourgeois society and its abstractions, its fetishes, its reified relations, could be so nominalistically dissolved), thereby simply placing the subject and object "right side up again" (p. 33). The materialist stringency of Hegel, to have seen the Mind, namely bourgeois commodity society, as an abstraction, as in fact the Subject—escapes Nicolaus. But the greatness of Hegelian philosophy is that it represented bourgeois society in its existing abstractness; that Hegel was able to develop the "expressions adequate to understanding," the "rational categories" (Marx). The 'Mind' of Hegel is not, as Nicolaus naïvely and in a Feuerbachian manner states, "a product of the human head," but rather is a product of the determinate *bourgeois* mode of production. Nicolaus confuses Marx with the Feuerbach of the *Essence of Christianity* in which the superterrestrial sphere is seen as the product of the human head and is placed on its feet. Although Nicolaus locates the core of idealism in the material world, he—like Feuerbach—does not get beyond the anthropological level. He does not undertake the Marxian task of examining bourgeois concepts, as they were expressed by Smith and Ricardo or Kant and Hegel, according to the relation of their social origin and social validity—that is, to critically derive them from the economy.

Nicolaus presents the history of knowledge as abstract and contingent: "Among the early Greek scientists were some whose special interest was in the phenomenon of change, motion, process" (p. 28). Why these phenomena suddenly acquired meaning —that here early forms of bourgeois society were developing, that perhaps they were connected with budding forms of commodity circulation, whose historical sphere of validity was the Polis—remains outside of Nicolaus' concern. He does not ask at all why it was that people at that time were able to think 'dialectically' just as he fails to examine why Hegel could have grasped bourgeois society metahistorically and dialectically as Logic. Nicolaus does not concern himself with questions of the historical origins of questions of validity and their social scope. He is thus able, in an undifferentiated way, to say of Hegel that he reviewed and gathered together all previous forms of "dialectics," from Asia to the Middle East as well as Greece and Europe. Hegel, however, was a better materialist than that. As opposed to Nicolaus who poses contradiction as universal and eternal, Hegel does not let dialectic appear in the Manichaean form of simple polar opposition. For Hegel, dialectic begins with the Eleatic school, with Zeno; that is to say, in the Polis.

Nicolaus' failure to grasp Hegel's thought adequately and his abstract and contingent history of knowledge are closely related to his understanding of dialectic as transhistorical. In Nicolaus' introduction to the *Grundrisse*, dialectic appears in a bourgeois manner, as a transhistorical manner of thinking, as the idealist Subject,

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"the dialectic," which Hegel merely "raised to a new higher level" (p. 28). Instead of determining dialectic as the existent category of determinate economic relations, of the bourgeois and capitalistic course of commodity and capital as did Marx, Nicolaus abstracts it. For him the dialectical "difficulty" is "not confined to a special separate branch of philosophy... The whole is in motion, the totality develops, it all had a beginning and implies an end" (p. 29). Such insights were not new with Hegel; they were not unfamiliar to Heraclitus, Avveroes, Siger von Brabant or Jakob Böhme. The Marxian critique becomes lost behind such commonplaces.

This transhistorical interpretation of dialectic leads Nicolaus to repeat the old mistake of separating method from content which entered into the labor movement with Bernstein. For Nicolaus, the *Grundrisse* is "the first known attempt...to apply the method...to major problems of theory" (p. 43). Marx would have been a bad historical materialist as well as a bad Hegelian had he maintained such a separation of method from its content. The dialectic is a specific method of a specific content. It is not method in the bourgeois sense in which, as Engels criticized, everything is subsumed under a general principle. Rather, it is the form of the movement of the concept, because this follows the movement of the object—a society dominated by commodities. In opposition to Hegel, Marx developed the categories in a critical economic direction, and, in so doing, denounced the transhistorical appearance, the quasi-natural quality of this society.

Within the post-Marxian tradition, the concept of the dialectic has been handled primarily as a category of History at best; as a category of Nature and Being at worst. Although after Hegel the concept of dialectic found, in Marx's critique of political economy, its existent determination as the categorical determination of bourgeois conditions and of capitalist class antagonisms, as a concept of struggle which is presented by the existing relations themselves, it later degenerated to a social democratic category of nature and history. With Stalin it became completely mystified as a category of Being. Nicolaus deals with the concept on this level.

Not only does Nicolaus transform Marx's method into a positive science; he presents it as the "natural" thought form which, to be sure, required a long prehistory as condition for its constitution. This eternalization of the dialectic reveals an ideological attitude further expressed in Nicolaus' treatment of Hegel's idealism. Instead of attempting to critically analyze it immanently and within its context, he treats it exactly as "the Church fathers treated pre-Christian religions"—as a superstition or a consciously concocted mystification. These two elements of Nicolaus' position—the transformation of Marx's critique into positive science and the consequent blindness to earlier forms—are due to his eternalization of the dialectic. What has emerged are exactly those attributes of bourgeois modes of thought analyzed by Marx. The social roots of this particular mode can be located in a third element of Nicolaus' position: his eternalization of a social form—proletarian labor.

The question of proletarian labor emerges in the course of Nicolaus' consideration of the relationship of money and capital. He discusses how, to Marx, money and capital are not simply economic categories, but rather come to signify two entire systems of social relationships "based on certain rules and laws, and involving a certain type of politics, culture, even personality" (p. 14). These two systems, while inherently related, exist as distinct and contradictory moments of a totality. The logical sphere of money—or simple commodity circulation—is one in which relations

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among individuals take on the form of equality and liberty. "Equality, because... the products exchanged are the embodiments of equal amounts of labour time. Liberty, because the partners in exchange presume and recognize each other as proprietors..." pp. 17-18). By proceeding to indicate that this sphere exists only as a logical and historical abstraction of one moment of the capitalist totality and has had no concrete reality as a whole, Marx lays the ground for a critique of bourgeois democratic ideology which equates this moment with the totality and seeks to make bourgeois liberty and equality more perfect by abolishing the very conditions (money and the market place) which form their foundation (p. 19). Emerging from, and yet contradicting this sphere is the other major moment of the capitalist totality—the sphere of capital, which has as its basis the exchange of labor power and the creation of surplus value. This process leads to the ever increasing growth of objectified labor, in the form of capital, as a hostile force over and against the worker. Nicolaus describes it as "the process of exploitation, or the extraction of surplus product from the workers' labour time. This process is the source of capitalist accumulation" (p. 20).

Nicolaus' description of capital accumulation is very ambiguous. It reveals a misunderstanding of the category of value, and therefore of proletarian labor as a capital form-determination—a social form particular to, and essential, for capitalism. The existence of a surplus product—more than is required to directly reproduce the producers—is characteristic of all historical societies. What characterizes capitalism is not a surplus product as such, but a particular *form* of the surplus which is tied to a particular form of the organization of production. The capital-specific form is surplus *value*—which is inseparable from a value-determined organization of production. The capital-specific form is surplus *value*—which is inseparable from a value-determined organization of production, i.e., (on the most abstract level) one based upon direct human labor as the only source of appropriable wealth, without reference to its qualitative dimension, and measured by time. Yet, in Nicolaus' description, the category "workers' labor time" is left unexamined. It is as if it is only "the extraction of surplus product" which defines capital accumulation, and not that the form of the surplus is determined by a social organization of production defined by the category "workers' labor time." What is determining is not that the surplus objectifications of laborers are appropriated by capitalists, but rather the form, concrete and material, of social labor under a capitalist-determined society.

This organization of labor is already implicitly present in the logical sphere of money, in the category of value itself. Although Nicolaus states that in the sphere of money products exchanged are embodiments of equal amounts of labor time, he does not follow through its implications for labor. Marx states that, "as in the theory, the concept of value precedes that of capital, but requires for its pure development a mode of production founded on capital."[7] This means that although money and capital do constitute distinguishable logical spheres, the development of the one out of the other must be dealt with. Particularly in this case, the category of abstract labor, the categorial substance of value, must be analyzed as it arises in simple commodity circulation and as it develops in production.

Nicolaus distinguishes money from capital in a manner such that money is not

7. *Grundrisse*, *op.cit.*, p. 251.

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understood as commodity and value form. This is incorrect. Particularly in the *Grundrisse,* this form of separation between money and capital does not exist. The social antagonisms, which totally unfold in capitalism, can only be understood when the dialectic of the value-form is grasped; when, therefore, the twofoldness of the commodity, the polarity of its form, as was analyzed by Marx in the first chapters of *Capital,* is understood. It is for this reason, as Marx repeatedly points out in the *Grundrisse*, that the origins and grounds of class relationships are to be searched for in the germ-form of the commodity, which arises initially as potential but which then develops into capitalist reality. Because of this, the value form, dialectic can also be read historically. That it can be presented logically is itself an expression of history which moves abstractly, not directly controlled by the practice of people. In a possible future society social labor will be so organized that there will be no fetishized relations. History consciously made means the end of an objectivistic logic of history.

Because Nicolaus fails to consider the dialectic of the value form he does not analyze the structure of value-creating labor. This emerges in his discussion of the importance of Marx's substitution of the category "labor power" for "labor" in the *Grundrisse* (pp. 44-47). His point of departure is Marx's statement that the labor theory of value, the idea that "all kinds of labor are equal and equivalent, because and so far as they are human labor in general, cannot be deciphered until the notion of human equality has already acquired the fixity of a popular prejudice." The historical condition for the emergence of this principle as popular prejudice is, according to Marx, "a society in which the great mass of the produce of labor takes the form of commodities, in which, consequently, the dominant relation between man and man is that of owners of commodities."[8]

It is important to note that Nicolaus quotes only the first half of this passage and calls this popular notion of human equality "the bourgeois revolutionary principle that all persons are created equal." However, he omits the second half, which ties this principle to the commodity form itself. This omission is significant. It implies the degree to which Nicolaus' notion of socialism is defined in terms of bourgeois-immanent categories. This direction in Nicolaus is buttressed by a false separation he makes between the specific commodity, labor power, and the commodity form itself—which falls out of his analysis. He mentions that it was a mistake of classical political economy to equate commodities with things, but fails to indicate in what way a commodity is more than a thing, what the contradictory identity of use-value and value means. Instead he simply and inadequately states, "This is a serviceable assumption for many applications, but when applied to the commodity 'labor,' it only reveals the capitalist prejudice that workers are so many objects to be used, manipulated and thrown away when worn out" (p. 45).

The implications of Nicolaus' misunderstanding of value become explicit in his discussion of how the concept "labor power" solved the problem posed falsely by classical economy as—what is the value of labor?—and in so doing made possible a theory of surplus value and capital accumulation: "Marx's thinking preserves the revolutionary foundation *implicit in* the labor theory of value, namely the principle of general human equality, and shows that in its bourgeois form this principle amounts for the workers to be the very opposite of human liberty. With the conception of 'labor power,' Marx resolves the inherent contradiction of the

8. *Capital,* Vol. I, *op.cit.,* p. 60.

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classical theory of value; he preserves what is sound in it, namely the determination of value by working time... By thus preserving what was sound and revolutionary in the theory, and bursting through the limitations contained in it, Marx turned the old theory into its opposite; from a legitimation of bourgeois rule into the theory of communist parties [!] explaining how the capitalist class grows wealthy from the workers' labour..." (p. 46). Before further probing the implications of this quote, a brief excursus on Marx is necessary. Marx took the categories of classical political economy and uncovered their social basis. He did not, as Nicolaus would have it, simply preserve the determination of value by labor time, but uncovered the nature of that "labor" which constitutes value. Value-creating labor is *not* labor in the sense of an intentional activity which changes the form of matter in a determinate way in the creation of a particular product, and which simultaneously is reflexive as a constituting element of the producers (what Marx calls concrete labor). Rather, value is the objectified measure of *abstract* labor. This category is not simply a conceptual abstraction of "real" labor, but is a social category—one which expresses the nature of social labor in a society determined as a whole by commodity production as the mediational moment between private and social, and simultaneously incorporates that as a moment of social historical becoming. In other words, the category provides the key to an understanding of capitalist social relations and their direction of development. However, this social category constituting value finds expression only in the material form of the use-value dimension, that of concrete labor, and yet gives the latter determinate social form.

The capitalist form of production is logically determined by the category of value —which should not be considered as simply a market category. The measure of wealth is the mass of direct labor time objectified—regardless of the mass and number of products produced. It is abstracted from the qualitative nature of the labor used in the production process. This production process is geared to the production of surplus value and, because only abstract *human* labor is value creating, necessarily rests on direct human labor—proletarian labor—as *the* source of appropriable wealth. The logic of the form of production is such that direct labor becomes increasingly subdivided into a complex of *one-dimensional* activities and the externalization of human productive abilities is cumulatively objectified into material forces of production which stand over and against living labor, rather than directly reflecting back as constitutive of the human capacities of the individual worker. For Marx, this process of alienation is necessary (viewed world-historically), and yet time-bound. It made possible a huge leap in social productive power and knowledge, even though this was at the cost of emptying and narrowing the individual workers. Yet, it is precisely this leap that increasingly comes into conflict with its presupposition: the material forces of production developed under capitalism increasingly contradict their value basis; their wealth-producing capacity is out of all proportion to that measured by the input of direct labor time.

This contradiction is often misunderstood as meaning that the difference between socialism and capitalism is only one of greater output of products. This misunderstanding forgets that overcoming has a moment of practical self-reflection, of *reversal*. In this case, the moment of self-reflection involves the structure of labor itself. The forces of production developed in the course of capitalism can, when the capital-determined form with its need for direct human labor is overcome, react back on social labor and change it such that the specific qualities of labor done

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under capitalism will be abolished.

The logical possibility of this reversal is grounded in Marx's dialectic of value and use-value, of form-determined and non-form-determined—not simply as it arises on the level of commodities, but as it develops in the unfolding of capital. Consider Marx's treatment of the machine: The machine is capitalist form-determined as constant capital. This does not mean that the machine is neutral, that under capitalism it is employed to the end of capital realization, and that it is simply this purpose which must be changed. Such a view remains bound within the bourgeois concept of instrumental reason. That machinery is form-determined means that the form of the machine itself is determined—not simply the purpose for which it is used. However, the machine, to Marx, is not totally subsumed under its form determination. The use-value dimension expresses a non-identical moment whose potential becomes increasingly explicit with the course of capital development—comes increasingly in real contradiction with its capital form-determination. But this remains a contradiction. There is no smooth linear progression to a new form. The course of capital-determined society drives forward technical development, whose concrete form remains an instrument of domination—yet whose concrete potential allows for a transformation of society, of the social division of labor such that not only will the goal of machine production be different, but the machines themselves as well.

Of course, the machine is immediately related to labor itself, in its identical and non-identical dimensions. Those writers who set labor as such identical with instrumental activity are, in effect, taking only one side of the Marxian theory, that of capital realization, and positing it as the totality—transhistorically! Instrumental activity is not to be equated with purposive activity in general. It should be seen as a description of activity whose goal is defined by an external objectivity (the "second nature" of capitalism, which increasingly supplants the compulsion of immediate material need)—which then determines the means. When thus grasped transhistorically and as totality, it is bound within the capital fetish. The overcoming involves the transformation, not simply of the goal, but of the form of labor and the form of the machine. The *mode* of production can be changed.

The socialist transformation of society, then, is not simply the abolition of private ownership of the means of production, but also involves the transformation of capital-determined organization of production so that direct, value-positing labor time no longer constitutes the form and measure of wealth. This means the material abolition of proletarian labor by the proletariat. The proletariat (as 'class' in general) is a historically specific category of alienation and should not be grasped as the Subject, but as *the not-yet-Subject*—that which constitutes the alienated Subject (Capital) and which becomes Subject by overthrowing capital and in the process abolishing that labor, essential to capital, which defines the proletariat itself. The relation people will have to the direct labor process will change such that labor will be constitutive of, and constituted by, the full social individual rather than, as under capitalism, by the "mere worker."[9] This is the *material* presupposition for the individual reincorporation of that social knowledge which was, under capitalism, first developed and expressed in society in general, i.e., the material, historical overcoming of alienation. The historicity of capitalism then, is identical with the

9. *Grundrisse*, *op.cit.*, p. 708.

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historicity of proletarian labor as source of social wealth, of value as social form of wealth, and with value-determined, proletarian-based production as social form of production.

In this light, one can more critically examine the category of general human equality to which Nicolaus refers. It is a category *of*, not outside, the bourgeois form of production. We are not speaking of an Idea of equality, but of equality which is based upon commodity production and exchange. It is common to refer to bourgeois equality as "abstract" and "formal." Marx specifies this further: it is an attribute of commodities which, in a society in which commodities are the dominant form taken by labor products, is reflected back on its source—persons. It is, in other words, a category of thing-mediated interaction and therefore has built into it the attribute of objects—"objectivity." 'Abstractness' is an integral aspect of this category. The practical equation of different sorts of products in exchange means the *de facto abstraction* and *reduction* of the various concrete labors they embody to abstract human labor. In this context, that category has two moments: the reduction of all actual labors to their common character as human labor; and the abstraction from all concrete forms and useful properties of the various labors. The latter, as process of alienation, is the capitalist complement of the former. "General human equality" first appears historically with general commodity production—as a category of alienation. *Both* aspects underly capitalism. From its initial logical determination in simple commodity circulation, it has already built into it that aspect which Marx further developed in his analysis of capital-determined production process: it is the equality of parts which together constitute a whole. Far from being only a market category, it expresses the actual structure of wage-labor—a productive relation such that workers plug onto the system as cogs of a meta-machine. The socialist transformation of society implies the overcoming, not the realization of "general human equality."

Marx must be understood as representing a break with that earlier (and later Marxist) socialist tradition which considered a socialist revolution the realization of the ideals of the French Revolution which had been warped by the domination of the bourgeoisie. In the *Grundrisse* and particularly in *Capital*, Marx shows the ideals themselves, in their positive revolt-inducing, as well as in their negative stabilizing moments as arising out of the commodity form—not universal Ideas sullied by a particularistic ruling class.

At this point we can return to the Nicolaus passage cited above. He misunderstands the negative nature of the critique: the immanent exposition of the categories which constitute the critique; that the categories of political economy are "critical" categories which denounce and point to the negation of a society built upon exploitation and oppression. Instead, he opposes the "sound and revolutionary" conception of the determination of value by labor time along with its concomitant principle of general human equality, to its bourgeois form. But it is clear that this opposition of content and form (as good and evil) is impossible, for the determination of value by labor time is inseparable from capitalism. It is precisely this which defines a condition of compulsion—one which constitutes and is constituted by value and which will be dissolved in a free society. The abolition of value as the dominant abstraction of bourgeois relations is a condition of freedom. Value is *the* defining category of capital-determined society, not the standard against

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which it is judged. Yet Nicolaus fails to develop the capitalist form of production as a logically necessary consequence of the category of value, which in its material form tends to increasingly threaten its social form (its value basis). This has its roots in Nicolaus' failure to examine the category of value itself. He sees only that its presupposition is the equality of human labor. By leaving unexamined the nature of that labor and the sort of equality with which it is bound, Nicolaus fails to come to an understanding of the value-determined structure of the capitalist mode of production. His analysis implies retention and realization, rather than the overcoming, of that equality implicit in that mode of production. This can only mean a concept of socialism which retains the mode of production based upon proletarian labor.

This same problem emerges when Nicolaus defines alienation as "fundamentally a particular relation of *property*, namely involuntary sale (surrender of ownership) to a hostile Other" (p. 50). In the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* Marx derives classes and hence property from the nature of abstract labor as already developed on the logical level of commodities. (This is the materialist concretization of alienation.) To reverse this, as Nicolaus does, is a far-reaching distortion of Marx which allows for an analysis of capitalism and socialism solely in terms of property. By omission, Nicolaus implicitly separates property relations from the sort of labor the worker does; that is, from the relationship of living labor to objectified labor. In so doing, Nicolaus blurs that central point, already mentioned, and indicated by Marx in the *Grundrisse* itself: that the overthrow of capitalism involves the self-abolition of the proletariat as a class—not simply in its existence defined *vis-à-vis* a capitalist class, but also in the material relation workers have to their labor and to the means of production, i.e., in the existence of wage-labor *vis-à-vis* capital.

Nicolaus writes a great deal about the proletariat, but he abstracts the theory away from the proletariat. His 'dialectic' is completely independent of wage-labor and capital. This is also expressed indirectly when he says that the fact that Marx "was able more than a century ago to grasp" the outlines of recent developments, "is a tribute not to his 'genius'. . . but to his method of work" (p. 63). However, Marx's theory cannot be simply reduced to method or genius. It is rather inseparably interwoven with bourgeois society and—this is particularly constitutive for the dialectic which becomes self-conscious with Marx—the revolutionary appearance of the negation of the negation: the struggling and self-organizing proletariat. Without class-struggle the cognitive conditions for the revolutionary theory of Marx would have been lacking.

The theory of "Dialectical Materialism" has often been criticized for its objectivism, the abolition of the subjective dimension of the theory of class struggle, which leads to the old bourgeois antinomy of social thought and action as either determined causally by social objectivity or mysteriously independent of it (the Party). This should be understood as the expression of a theory of a socialism which remains within the bounds of capital-determined production whose essence—value—as form-determination of social labor is retained and even glorified rather than overcome.

Despite Nicolaus' interpretation, Marx never meant that the "study and development of revolutionary theory" should have been the primary task of the League of Communists in 1850 (p. 8). Theory was not to have been the abstract

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creation of "the" League of Communists. Rather, the material ground of an adequate theory was, in spite of setbacks, provided at the time by the activity of the organized proletariat as well as by the increased development and spread of industrialization. The course of historical development began to drive in the direction of the realization of revolutionary theory which had arisen on its basis. Nicolaus misses this connection and therefore treats theory as abstracted from society and from practice. But Marx's theoretical work is not abstract 'theory;' it is, rather, the result and the anticipation of a proletariat which is organizing itself on a worldwide scale. It would never have occurred to Marx that the primary task of the revolutionary proletariat was the mere study of revolutionary theory. Even during this period of the reconstituting class struggle, Marx and Engels never withdrew from everyday political battles. In spite of Marx's activity in the British Museum, both remained involved in the labor of their party.

One does not have to mechanically proceed by reading all of the *Grundrisse* and Hegel's *Logic* before beginning *Capital*, and that "Wage, Price and Profit" is a useful introduction to Marx's work. Nevertheless, by ironically suggesting that the study of these three works is "a project for a long term in prison" (p. 61), Nicolaus implicitly makes an unacceptable separation between practical political work and theoretical political work. Apparently, one can only study the major theoretical works when not actively politically engaged. One wonders why Nicolaus took the time to translate the *Grundrisse*! "Meanwhile much can be gained from *Wage, Price and Profit* and 'On Contradiction' " (p. 61). The crucial import of "On Contradiction" for those not lucky enough to have a long term in prison is, in the American context, far from obvious. Moreover, which revolutionary actions in the United States constitute this 'meanwhile' that Marxist education has to limit itself to these two pamphlets? If, in fact, there is only sufficient time to study these two pamphlets, the revolution must be waiting impatiently by the door.

Marx bound his critique as method, and the existence of the proletariat as class, to capital-determined society. The transcendence of the latter, which implies the disappearance of Marx's critical dialectic, can only occur through the self-abolition of the proletariat. Nicolaus' position only *appears* to unravel this complex. Instead, it transforms all of its elements positively: a positive science of materialist dialectics presupposes the further existence of proletarian labor, which implies the retention of a capital-determined social organization. All of these elements can already be located in the orthodox Social Democracy of the Second International at that point at which, lip service to revolution to the contrary, that movement had adjusted itself to the capitalist order. It also appears, however—and this is more to the point—in the Soviet Union in the 1920s. The contradiction between the actual social transformation required—which was analogous to, but necessarily in a different form than, that accomplished under capitalism in the West—and its presentation as socialism, was veiled by a transformation of Marxism from critical to positive science. The transhistoricity with which Nicolaus seeks to overlay Marx's "method" is derived from the legitimation theory of building socialism in one country, in which the attempt was made to guarantee the revolution by inscribing it in nature and history. From this point of view Stalin's well-known catechism, "Dialectical and Historical Materialism," becomes "a useful first introduction particularly for pedagogic purposes" (p. 43). Standing in this tradition, Nicolaus falls back at least upon Hegel, although the latter would never have attempted to exhaust the totality

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of the world by means of a few laws. Stalin's dry laws, four in number, abstract the commonplaces of a Heraclitean *Weltanschauung* out of Engels. Which specific social relations in the Soviet Union allowed themselves to be presented in universal law-like form is another question, not to be dealt with here. For Mao Tse-tung, as well, the Marxian theory—primarily one derived from Stalin's interpretation—was abstracted from its object and utilized to explain the phenomena of an agricultural country in the revolution. Particularly in China this was, in fact, successfully translated into practice. However, because these small writings of Stalin and Mao present the Marxian theory as universal and eternal, they can hardly be acclaimed as "the classical exposition of materialist dialectics as a whole" (p. 43). They were conceptualized on the basis of precapitalized lands, but with the claim of universality—which was to have served world revolutionary politics and did serve as legitimation for a particular mode of social construction. This transformation of Marxism into an "ideology of legitimation" (Negt) meant that the concept of the liberation of the proletariat became separated from its material meaning—the abolition of proletarian labor. This necessarily meant that the dialectic became separated from its historicity. It reappears as transhistorical: a bourgeois form of thought in a critical materialist cloak—a "theory of communist parties" (p. 46).

On Conceptual Archaeology: A Reply to Postone and Reinicke

by John Keane and Brian Singer

By any measure, the revival of North American interest in Marxism and the attempt to reconstitute it, is now as pronounced as it was during the 1930s. The translation of the *Grundrisse* has certainly fueled this reawakening. Indeed, in an early essay, Nicolaus located that translation as a "missing link" which could be expected to eradicate the pessimism of such Marxists as Baran and Sweezy, and recharge flagging revolutionary hopes in advanced capitalist societies.[1] Postone and Reinicke (following Semprun's and McLellan's early comments against the Althusserians)[2] point correctly to the continuity between the early writings and the *Grundrisse* and to the latter's implicit development of a self-reflexive *Erkenntniskritik*.

1. Martin Nicolaus, "The Unknown Marx," in *New Left Review*, 48 (March-April, 1968), pp. 41-62, reprinted in Robin Blackburn, ed., *Ideology in Social Science* (London, 1972).

2. David McLellan, "Introduction" to *Marx's Grundrisse* (London, 1971); Jacques Semprun, "Economie, Politique et Philosophie dans *les Grundrisse* de Marx," *L'Homme et la Société*, 7 (1968), pp. 59-68. Semprun points to the peculiar Althusserian deformation of the French translation, and notes that "Marx's manuscripts of 1857-58—and no one can invoke the plea of ignorance any longer since they are accessible in French—render precarious, if not the project, at least the essentials produced by the research of Althusser and his friends" (61). For a nonsensical Althusserian rendition of the *Grundrisse* as a "transitional and incomplete work," see Keith Tribe's "Remarks on the Theoretical Significance of Marx's *Grundrisse*," *Economy and Society*, Vol. 3, no. 2 (May, 1974), pp. 180-210, and his "Critique of the *Grundrisse*," *Intervention* (Melbourne), no. 4 (May, 1974), pp. 41-65. For a qualitatively different analysis of Nicolaus' distortions see Paul Piccone, "Reading the *Grundrisse*," published (in Japanese) in *Gendai no Riron*, no. 132 (December, 1974).

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Especially important in this regard is their argument about the very great extent to which the *Grundrisse* remains "Hegelian" in character. Nicolaus agrees nominally: "the question of Hegel can hardly be avoided when studying the *Grundrisse*" (p. 26). Yet, as Postone and Reinicke point out, Nicolaus, following close on the heels of Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks*, has hardly written the final epitaph on the ashes of Hegelianism. To dismiss idealism on the grounds that it falsely concludes "that *only* the logical concepts worked up by the mind have any reality" (p. 27) is to ignore Hegel's understanding of the dialectical mediation of subject and object, and German Idealism's efforts to unite subject and object, reason and society, theory and practice. For Hegel, as for Marx, form and content are always inextricably interwoven.[3] It is therefore impossible to speak of a "dialectical method" separated from its content. With Nicolaus both become reified and the *Grundrisse* is conceived as a kind of New Testament, for it "shows the first attempt self-consciously to change, and *to apply the [Hegelian] method*, at the same time, to major problems of theory" (p. 43). This smacks of Engels' later view that, in order to choose which revolutionary tactics should be adopted in a particular situation, "one has only *to apply the theory* to the economic and political conditions of the country in question."[4] Postone and Reinicke are thus correct. Nicolaus' abstract universalization of "the dialectic," stemming as it does from this mangled understanding of Hegel, must be seen for what it is: a mere re-cycling of the vulgar unreflexive materialism of the older Engels, the Second International and the Diamat tradition.

Yet, the alternative underlying their criticism of Nicolaus is problematic. In fact, Postone and Reinicke have offered a standpoint that systematically rejects and excludes the centrality of subjectivity and practice. Moreover, they have failed to come to grips with the changed constellation of social conditions and social consciousness in late capitalism. Instead of updating and reworking Marx's categories, they have merely interpreted them—and in a purely formal manner. When all is said and done, Postone and Reinicke's efforts represent yet another attempt at what might be called conceptual archaeology, whereby Marxism is to be reinvigorated by unearthing the treasured "What Marx Really Said."

Such failures are hardly fortuitous, for they are directly embedded within the very nature of their "reconstruction." They interpret Marx as saying that "the peculiar object" contains within it a "specific 'peculiar logic' which must be grasped in order to understand the [object's] concrete manifoldness."

Yet, the quintessence of materialism is its insistence that the totality of social being cannot be reduced to thought; that thought cannot be identified with social being because its understanding of the latter can only be partial. And it is this limitation of thought that presupposes an active relation between thinking and being: "the production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness is *directly interwoven* with the material activity and the material relationships of men; *it is the language of actual life*... Consciousness can never be anything else except conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process."[5] In this sense, we must rephrase

3. Cf. Ernst Bloch, *Ueber Methode und System bei Hegel* (Frankfurt am Main, 1970).
4. Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence* (Moscow, 1965), p. 384.
5. "The German Ideology," in Easton and Guddat, eds., *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society* (New York, 1967), p. 508. "As in the natural body head and hand wait upon each other, so the labor process unites the labor of the hand with that of the head."

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Postone and Reinicke's understanding to say that it is not the object that exhibits the logic, but the constituting subject who bestows on the object a particular logic not only in order to grasp its 'concrete manifoldness' but also to act upon and transform that object. That is, the very act of knowledge contains a moment of subjectivity and practice, a moment which is occluded and denied by any objectivistic account. As such, the problem of evaluating a given theory or theoretical contribution is not merely one of gauging the corresponding adequacy of the method to its object. The *telos* inscribed within that theory must also be evaluated. Thus, the historical character of any theory is not only a matter of the historical attributes of the object but also those of the subject.

These points must be reiterated because Postone and Reinicke's failure to recognize them entails some serious consequences, both theoretical and practical. Firstly, because they hold that the actual reality of the object can be reflected and mirrored in thought, they tend to uncritically identify the corpus of Marx's writings—especially his later works—with the actual social relations of both early and late capitalism. It is as if Hegel's self-understanding of the dialectic as coming to fruition in his own mind, was transferred to the mind of Marx. We certainly do not wish to downplay the superiority of Marx's insights, but this tendency to deify Marx leads into a theoretical *cul-de-sac*. The "workings" of the totality of capitalist relations in Marx's time cannot be said to have been constituted solely by Marx's writings; and this is even more true of our own times. Trapped within their deification of Marx, Postone and Reinicke are simply unable to move beyond his categories.

There is a second and related problem. Because they divorce the important moment of subjectivity and practice from the act of writing the *Grundrisse*, they also divorce the act of reading from the same moments. The *Grundrisse,* of course, was not only intended by Marx as an explication of certain problems (e.g., the relationship between money and capital), but must also be seen as an attempt to actively intervene in the politics of the 1850s, the oncoming "deluge" of economic crisis as Marx referred to it. Similarly, in their interpretation of the *Grundrisse*, Postone and Reinicke see themselves as mere reproducers of, empathizers with, Marx's "psychic state" when writing that text. Yet, textual analysis is necessarily a hermeneutic project in which the "located" interpreter reconstitutes the meaning of that text—in this case the *Grundrisse*—through the optics of current social and political problems. And so, the task assigned the reader of the *Grundrisse* is not only one of clarifying its meaning, but of actively confronting and reconstituting Marx's insights in the context of the problems peculiar to late capitalist societies. Thus, "orthodox Marxism" does not necessarily entail an adherence to doctrines of Social Democracy and Communist Parties. Orthodoxy can be crude or scholastic. It can have revolutionary pretensions or it can have none. Orthodoxy is simply a matter of utilizing categories which are no longer rooted within present social conditions in late capitalism and therefore cease to illuminate real possibilities for the development of revolutionary consciousness and revolutionary practice within those societies.

Postone and Reinicke's epistemological problems are reproduced in their concept of the dialectic. They rightly criticize Nicolaus' objectivistic dialectic and his understanding of it as a transhistorical method. And yet they recreate a similar problem, though in a much more subtle and clandestine manner. They acknowledge that objectivity cannot be merely reduced to external environment; to do that would be

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to fall victim to the reified character of objectifications in capitalist society. Objectivity also entails an understanding of the way humans objectify their reality, of the world constituting significance of subjectivity. However, rather than locating the dialectic in the interaction between subject and object they deposit it entirely within the reified object. In fact, their concept of the dialectic is predicated on the separation of the subject from the object such that the 'particular logic' of the latter is detached from and determines the former. And because, according to Postone and Reinicke, this condition only obtains in the capitalist epoch (wherein the process of reification is 'totalized'), the history of this latter mode of production, unlike other modes of production, can be deduced a priori via an analysis of the immanent unfolding of its reified categories. The dialectic then becomes the method truly adequate to such an analysis: "...dialectic is grasped as a critical commodity and capital denouncing concept which must now be seen as a critical concept which must now be seen as having arisen with the appearance of the commodity form and as being the only method adequate to a social form determined as a totality by commodity production (i.e., capitalist society) with its historically specific contradictions." The reduction of the history of capitalism to a history of its abstractions and the reduction of its abstractions to the commodity form, sets the stage for an elaborate justification of an objectivistic and deterministic notion of dialectic.

The theoretical and practical consequences of this conception of the dialectic are essentially the same as those of similar, but more crude formulations. Because it moves entirely within the contradictions of the commodity form, the dialectic necessarily becomes detached from the thought and activity of individuals and classes in late capitalism. As such, theoretical analysis becomes redundant, stagnant and abstract in the sense of having no roots in real social processes. This objectivism is particularly true of their concept of the proletariat. They correctly point out that "Nicolaus writes a great deal about the proletariat, but he abstracts the theory away from the proletariat," yet they are themselves guilty of the same charge. In their essay "The Proletariat" becomes an abstract and romantic category. To be sure, the truth content and practical potency of the recognition of Marx's categories depends on its being rooted in, and giving expression to progressive moments within, the working class, broadly defined to include not only those in industry, but also those office and "reflective" workers (technicians, teachers, etc.), so crucial to the structure of late capitalism. Yet, this category of "proletariat" cannot be blindly or abstractly idolized: cognizance must be made of the fact that, trapped within the cultural hegemonic web of late capitalism, this "working class" is presently incapable of transcending its own domination.[6]

The latent objectivism of Postone and Reinicke's dialectic means that it is not only detached from subjectivity but also its concomitant practice. That is, social actors remain pure spectators, contemplating the immanent unfolding of the dialectic. Postone and Reinicke warn us that the future is a choice between socialism and barbarism, but nowhere do they demonstrate the potential mediations whereby the former alternative might be realized. For them we must assume that revolutionary practice is an essentially *post hoc* and purely voluntaristic adjunct to the dialectic.

6. On this problem in the North American context, see Stanley Aronowitz, *False Promises* (New York, 1974).

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Similarly, the problem of objectivism is smuggled into their discussion of the transition period. They argue correctly that the transition to socialist society will involve "the transformation—not simply of the goal—but of the form of labor and the form of the machine." And yet they understand this transformation as being dependent on the ability of the forces of production to reduce the realm of necessity, i.e., necessary labor-time. Following Marx's comments in the *Grundrisse* (pp. 690-711) about the growing importance of fixed capital in the capitalist accumulation process, Postone and Reinicke claim that "the forces of production developed in the course of capitalism can, when the capital-dete mined form with its need for direct human labor is overcome, react back on social labor and change it such that the specific qualities of labor done under capitalism will be abolished." Yet, as Rovatti has warned, an evolutionary socialist standpoint can be wrung out of this view.[7] The capitalist-induced tendency to reduce human labor time to a minimum is said to thus carry with it a concomitant tendency towards increasing the quantity of "free time," itself a precondition of the development of social individuality. Aside from the failure of late capitalism to greatly expand this leisure time, Postone, Reinicke and Marx underestimate the extent to which this leisure time has been colonized by the false and distorted needs of late capitalism's cultural sphere. Postone and Reinicke's faith in the process of displacement of variable by constant capital therefore tends both to postpone the realization of socialism and to deemphasize the importance of the social relations of production in the reproduction of late capitalism and the need to consciously transcend those relations under socialism.

To summarize: Postone and Reinicke have presented yet another version of Marxist Orthodoxy. Their dialectic is fundamentally objectivistic, and results in a deification of Marx's categories, a withdrawal and abstraction from actual social processes in late capitalism, and a deemphasis on the importance of conscious revolutionary praxis in transcending the domination encapsulated within those processes. They have missed the significance of alterations in the character of capitalist society in the twentieth century, and the ways in which Marx's insights must be reconstituted and reinvigorated in the quest of transforming these new conditions.

These altered conditions we have termed late capitalism. Descriptively this term indicates, not the transcendence of "capitalism," but the oligopolization and internationalization of capitalist productive relations, the thorough intervention of the state into every nook and cranny of social life, the gradual generation of distorted needs in the cultural sphere, and the increasing importance of science, technology, and reflective workers in the capitalist accumulation process. The *Grundrisse* itself foreshadows some of these developments and herein lies its very significance. To take but one brief example the passages on fixed capital and the importance of science and technology in the productive process (pp. 690-711). There, Marx suggests that the capitalist accumulation process increasingly depends on scientific research, and that "pure" science becomes technological in character: "Invention...becomes a business" (p. 704). The capitalist drive to dominate nature is stepped up (p. 700), and to the extent that technology-fueled fixed capital replaces direct living labor

7. Pier Aldo Rovatti, "The Critique of Fetishism in Marx's *Grundrisse*," *Telos*, no. 17 (Fall 1973), pp. 56-69.

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power, the latter becomes relatively unimportant, though no less alienated: "to the degree that large industry develops, the creation of real wealth comes to depend less on labor time and on the amount of labor employed...but depends on the application of this science to production... Labor no longer appears so much to be included within the production process; rather, the human being comes to relate more as watchman and regulator to the production process itself" (pp. 704-705). To be sure, these themes are but poorly developed intimations which, as inheritance, we must amend, refine and reconstitute. They are certainly not mere objects of conceptual archaeology. For, the dialectic of theory and practice is not a time-honored "Method," nor a relationship which is given, assumed or taken for granted. Rather, theory attempts to understand not only its object, but also its own role as an element in the dialectical movement and transcendence of its object: "The theory occupies itself with reflection on the interrelationships of its origin and with anticipation of those of its application, and thus sees itself as a necessarily catalytic moment within the social complex of life which it analyzes; and this complex it analyzes as integral interconnections of compulsions, from the viewpoint of the possible sublation—resolution and abolition—of all this."[8] In question of human liberation, Marxian theory—"not afraid of its findings and just as little afraid of the conflict with the powers that be"[9]—must attempt to defrost those social conditions in late capitalism which freeze that quest.

8. Jürgen Habermas, "Introduction: Some Difficulties in the Attempt to Link Theory and Practice," in *Theory and Practice* (Boston, 1973), p. 2.

9. "Marx's Letter to A. Ruge," in Easton and Guddat, *op.cit.*, p. 212.

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REVIEWS:

Frederic Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972. 229 pages. $10.50 cloth; $4.75 paper.

Victor Erlich, *Russian Formalism, History-Doctrine*. The Hague: Mouton, 1969. 311 pages. $10.50.

Lukács attacked modernism in twentieth century literature as "pure formalism," and echoed with the choice of that term a long ideological and political struggle—which was in many ways only incidentally over literature. In an article by Brecht, only recently published, the model of the nineteenth century narriative novel offered by Lukács is opposed with a paradoxical reply. "Realism is not a mere question of form. Were we to copy the style of these realists, we would no longer be realists... The criteria for popular art and realism must therefore be chosen generously and carefully, and not drawn merely from existing realistic works... By doing so, one would arrive at formalistic criteria, and popular art and realism in form only." How are we to grasp a debate in which each attacks the other for being formalistic? The problem lies naturally in the conception of form and the obsolescence of the form-content dichotomy. For example, the Anna Seghers-Lukács debate that occurred in the thirties through an exchange of letters appeared almost unintelligible since in defending Kafka, Dos Passos and others, Seghers remained wholly within Lukács' conceptual framework—and thus could only produce the most subjective reasons for her preferences. In response to Lukács' claim that the "common man" cannot identify with these new techniques, Seghers says, "What kind of 'mirrors' did we have during the war and shortly after the war, when we grew up? They reflected a world of the past, alien to us... But we preferred even the tiniest fragment that truly reflected even a fragment of our own world." Having decided that literature be dealt with as "mirrors" and "reflections," Seghers and Lukács stand on the same ground, with the debate revolving around "taste" or the accuracy of the "mirror." The antinomy found in Lukács between a conception of a recipe for realism and a rigid historicism was not a personal problem but the theoretical and practical inheritance of those experiencing the dissolution of the classical bourgeois forms. It only maintained itself in this rigid form through an enforced amnesia, obliterating the work of theoreticians who, in the midst of a social revolution, had glimpsed a materialist theory of literary forms.

The Russian Formalists and Prague Structuralists are at the center of a new debate concerning the conjuncture of literature and ideology, and the basis for a theory of form. Literary criticism has always been the displaced focus for theories of culture and ideology. The last two decades have seen these areas emerge as predominate within Marxism, accompanying a critique of mechanism, reductionism and economism. However, for literature, this critical Marxism has continued to demand a both a sociological critique and a relative autonomy. Adorno's essay on

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1. Brecht, "Against Georg Lukács", *New Left Review* No. 84 (March-April, 1974). Also with regard to points raised in this review, see the correspondence between Benjamin and Adorno in *New Left Review* 81 (September-October 1973) and Benjamin's "Talking to Brecht," *New Left Review* 77 (January-February 1973).
2. J. Rühle, *Literature and Revolution* (New York: Praeger Press, 1960), p. 200.

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lyric poetry is a perfect "nest" of these contradictions between autonomy and social determination, which he both recognizes and savors.[3] They rest on that paradox of a literature which is "separate," which refuses to become useful and yet which embodies in its *language and content* the markst of its historical birth. The following discussion hopes to clarify two aspects of this "return" to the Russian Formalists' studies of Language and Literature represented by Jameson's and Erlich's work: first, to indicate how "poetics" (meaning a science of literary effects) transcended the tired discussion of form content, reflection, realism and second, the relation between literary criticism and the *practice* of artists liberating artistic production as clarified by a science of language.

Through the hindsight of Stalinist terror it is easy to forget that the period after the revolution was one of immense creativity, firmly rooted in the experimentation required to open up social institutions to the people. For example, Erlich discusses, in the context of his material on the Futurists, how common it was to have spontaneous poetry readings in the streets or at meetings, and how even in the worst of times there were innumerable groups extending debate and participation on cultural topics. Jakobson points out that even during the civil war it wasn't considered unusual that a man would trade four bushels of grain for a collection of Russian Fairy Tales—since that was a good price. Yutkevitch describes the foundation of the Moscow Film Institute in similar terms, "They were astonishing and wonderful days—the beginnings of a revolutionary art. When we talk about the years when we started artistic work, people are always surprised by the birth date of almost all the directors and the major artists of those times. We were incredibly young! We were sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds when we entered our artistic lives... The revolution had made way for the young... There had never been so many theaters (and incidentally the theaters were free); never had so many books—particularly volumes of poetry—appeared. Never had there been so much experiment in the theatre and in painting."[4]

The original Russian Formalist group, the Moscow Linguistic Circle, was bound in friendship and inspiration to the Futurists, especially Mayakovsky. The Futurist poets emerged in Russia with the spirit of surrealism in France—but with different compositional techniques. They were responding not only to symbolism and religiously inspired poetry but to the whole "stifling past." Respectable society, common sense and good taste, all came in for direct attack. Their most famous manifesto was called "A Slap in the Face of Public Taste." It demanded that Pushkin, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy be thrown overboard and that poets be given the right to revolutionize the totality of language and literary convention. Love and romanticism would go, along with obsolete rules of grammar. As Mayakovsky

3. Adorno, "Lyric Poetry and Society," *Telos* 20 (Summer 1974). Adorno sees the same importance in poetry as the Russian formalists had—in its relation to language. "[Lyric poetry] has this objectivity only if its withdrawal into itself and away from the social surface is motivated by social forces over and beyond the head of the author. *This is accomplished by means of language*. The specific paradox belonging to lyric poetry—the subjective personal element transforming itself into an objective one—is bound to that specific importance which poetry gives to linguistic *form*, an importance from which the primacy of language in all literature (prose forms as well) derives" (p. 60). A similar analysis of the conjuncture between poetry, politics and language is developed at greater length by H.M. Enzensberger in *The Consciousness Industry* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974).

4. *Le Cinema Sovietique par ceux qui l'ont fait* (Paris: Les Editieurs Francaise, 1966).

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proclaimed, "We have invaded the love whispers of the cozy porches with the thousand foot steps of the ages. These are our rhythms—the cacophony of wars and revolutions" (Erlich, p. 43).

This polemical, exaggerated concept of "shaking loose the syntax" (arguments that bring to mind Tucholsky's sarcastic comment that "owing to inclement weather the German revolution occurred in music") brought these poets into contact with a group of students trying to throw off the conceptions of philology and neo-grammarianism in linguistics and literary criticism. What intrigued them was the Futurist artistic practice. A typical poem had several characteristics: the "self-sufficient word," and splitting off of the words "referent" and a "playing" with the word through association and word sound. Mayakovsky argued that, "art is not a copy of nature, but the determination to distort nature in accordance with its reflection in the individual consciousness" (Erlich, p. 46). All this leads to the priority of form, the importance of language (rather than psychological or historical factors) in the production of literature and the autonomy of the literary work. These programmatic aspects became important as they converged with an emerging science of language which was claiming language as a field irreducible to psychology or history (philology) and demonstrating that language is not simply "names for things." Jakobson puts this conjuncture most clearly. "Perhaps the strongest impulse toward a shift in the approach to language and linguistics, however, was—for me, at least,—the turbulent artistic movements of the early twentieth century. The great men of art born in the 1880s—Picasso, Joyce, Braque, Stravinsky, Xlebnikov, Le Corbousier—were able to complete a thorough and comprehensive schooling in one of the most placid spans of world history, before the 'last hours of universal calm' are shattered by a train of cataclysms... The extraordinary capacity of these discoveries...is intimately allied to their unique feeling for the dialectical tension between the parts and the uniting whole, and between the conjugated parts."[5]

The term Russian Formalism really applies only to the original Moscow group—which lacked for the most part the "tools" to accomplish the ends it put forward in emotional and polemical language. Thus the Petrograd Society (usually called *Opojaz*) with its emphasis on literary history and social analysis (Shklovsky and Eichenbaum—these are really the "Formalists" Jameson concentrates on) was a reaction against the extreme position of the Moscow group and therefore should not be lumped in with the latter. The same applies to the Prague Structuralists (especially R. Jakobson and N. Troubetzkoy who went far beyond the "formalism" by deepening their study of linguistics and phonology. But there is some sense in treating the Formalists as the "seed" for both these developments. As students of philology the original Formalists were dissatisfied with the positivistic conception of science and the psychologism that sustained neo-grammarianism. Explanations remained at the level of simple causal schemas or broad historicistic views, and their teachers maintained a reductionism, resolving language into psychology and physiology, and literature in philosophic-religious tendencies.

The work that produced the greatest impact on these students, and which became a weapon against the neo-grammarian view, was Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*. Of course, Husserl's anti-psychologism was the main point but, further, Husserl

5. R. Jakobson, "Retrospect," *Selected Writings* Vol. I (The Hague: Mouton, 1962), pp. 631ff.

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seemed to have set the ground for an anti-empiricist view of language. They saw in Husserl a method for distinguishing between that in language which is merely factual data, dialect and temporal linguistic changes, from that in language which can be the object of lawful and rigorous analysis. Also Husserl's distinction between object (*Gegenstand*) and meaning (*Bedeutung*) bore out the Formalists position that language does not simply "refer" to things but "presents" objects through the immanent meaning of the word. This was, of course, the "practice" of the Futurists, whose isolation of the word and liberation of syntax showed that language possessed its own immanent, systematic relationships.

If we ignore for our purposes the linguistic theories that the Formalists tried to develop and concentrate on the relation of linguistics and literary criticism, the influence of Husserl and the rejection of neo-grammarianism lead in two directions. First, an emphasis on synchronic studies concentrating on "poetics" attempting to reveal immanent laws of language which explain the production of an "artistic effect," and second, studies of literature as a set of "devices" for producing effects or highlighting meaning by "making strange" the objective world. Art is a device, lay bare the device—here was both the demystification polemic of the Futurists and the linguistic emphasis of the Formalists. As Erlich notes, "All other components of the literary work, its 'ideology,' its emotional content, or the psychology of the characters were found secondary, if not totally irrelevant; they were airily dismissed as post factum 'motivation' of the devices employed... Some of the more extreme Formalist statements went so far as to deny altogether the relevance of social and ideological considerations" (Erlich, p. 77). This combination of isolationism and synchronic concentration would have to be revised before a literary theory could emerge. Particularly in their isolationist conception of the work of art, the Formalists were being lead into a new reductionism, explaining all literary phenomena within the sphere of language.

Before looking at the alternative conception offered by the *Opojaz* group, some discussion of the "linguistic model" is necessary. Jameson's book is concerned with evaluating the linguistic model as a general conception for organizing knowledge of any systematic structure, including a society. He takes as his object the late Formalists or Morphologists (Eichenbaum, Propp and Shklovsky) and the French Structuralists (Lévi-Strauss, Derrida, the *Tel Quel* group and Althusser). Though all these theoreticians may be too heterogeneous for one model, Jameson is not wrong in placing Saussure at the origin of these attempts. However, the original Russian Formalists knew little of Saussure, and Jakobson only read him after moving to Prague in 1920. Also, to the Prague Structuralists Saussure still represented the antinomic, bare and excessively formal view of language which they were trying to overcome.

Jameson presents Saussure's thought as a series of oppositions or antinomies. These begin with the initial separation of *langue* and *parole*. Saussure made a distinction, within linguistics, between the systematic structure of language and each actualization of language through speech, which he viewed as essentially contingent and accidental. Thus a speaker may produce language because of physiological, psychological or other contextual reasons, but the language he must utilize is already structured as an irreducible and prior system not dependent on its possible verbalization. This corresponds, in a way, to Saussure's general distinction between the synchronic and diachronic dimensions of language. A system is synchronic when all its elements and factors are determined in a single and same "moment" or state

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within the system itself, whereas diachronic refers to the intervention of factors at different states in the development of the system. Saussure's view was that diachronic change in language was always accidental and arbitrary (these would be changes in words or speech due to population shifts, geographic factors, etc.), whereas synchronic relations were systematic and necessary (that is, internal to the structure). Saussure's most famous distinction was the analysis of the sign into *signifiant* (signifier) and *signifié* (signified). It simply meant that any sign is the unity between a material set of marks or entity and an intelligible meaning. The signifier "tree" is a particular set of marks whose signified meaning is the intelligible concept of tree. However, as such, the word bears no natural or immediate relation to any specific referent, the object tree, since a different arrangement of marks, *l'arbre*, has the same signified meaning. A general semiology—which could include any sign system—would study the internal relations, the systematic character, of signifier and signified, quite independently of their referent objects.

Jameson's point is that Saussure both recognizes the inseparability of these various oppositions—the necessity for both sides to be present for there to be any communication—while also holding them rigidly apart. This produces the classic paradoxes of antinomic thought which ends up denying access to the very object of knowledge it begins with. Jameson develops his criticism along the following lines, "We here more clearly perceive the moment in which the originality of Saussure's point of departure (the distinction of diachronic and synchronic) returns to limit his results: for the repudiation of history, which at the very outset resulted in an inability to absorb change into the system as anything but meaningless and contingent datum, is now reproduced, at the very heart of the system itself, as an inability to deal with syntax as such" (Janeson, pp. 37-38). In each of these oppositions Saussure reserves systematization for one side only (*langue*, synchrony, sign) and leaves the other side to the realm of simple facticity and contingency (speech, diachrony, object). In the rigidity of the separation Saussure achieves a high degree of formal abstraction but an absence of content. Saussure, however, in spite of the limitation, both put an end to the whole neo-grammarian view and opened up the domain of semiology. It was now clear that language is a system wholistically determined and as such incompatible with reductionist or substance theories of language. Language is not a substance: it is a form; it is not a picture of "things:" it is an interdependent and relational system of signs.

However, in the course of his study, Jameson seems to take Saussure as the model of structuralism and hence symptomatic of all structural studies—rather than symptomatic of a formalist approach. At one point Jameson suggests that the alternative to Saussure is found in Chomsky's attempt to turn to creative speech acts and incorporate *parole* into the domain of systematic knowledge. Rather, it would seem that the alternative to Saussure was present within structural theory when Jakobson criticized Saussure on the grounds that oppositions in language were not in the form of either or separations but binary distinctions of mutual implication (both Jakobson and Troubetzkoy were very influenced by Hegel's concept of dialectical opposition and refer to it when explaining their opposition to Saussure's rigid distinctions). In Chomsky's generative grammar there is no conceptual advance beyond Saussure's formalism since Chomsky's distinction within speech of performence-competence—between the actual production of speech and the potential ability to speak—is a recapitulation of *langue* and *parole*. Also because of this,

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Chomsky continues to view language as a monologue which can be studied as the innate capacity of the speaker—whether or not he actualizes it—independently of interaction or purpose. Jakobson's view was that language was in its essence a social institution whose purpose was communication involving a sender and a receiver, a message and a code. Jakobson's critique of the formal "model" is the only way to avoid both reductionism and objectivism in the study of language. Without a concept of the teleology of communication, Jakobson argued, one would either fall into the rigid antinomies of Saussure or have recourse to reductionism which would obliterate language in the name of such idealist formulations as "innate mental structure," and thus reassert the hierarchical and objectivist conception of reducing each social science into bio-physiology.

Though it is impossible to give any detail concerning such a view of language, by limiting the topic to its application to literature I think it can be shown that there is an alternative to Saussure's formalism which produces valuable insights. For this purpose I want to introduce a theory of form explicated by a structuralist who Jameson inexplicably ignores—especially in view of the obvious impact and importance of his view to literary theory. This approach can be found in the work of Louis Hjelmslev, especially the essay "The Content Form of Language as a Social Factor" in *Essais linguistique*. Hjelmslev recognized that any form content distinction is both arbitrary and dynamic. That is, if either side is examined it can be shown that, as Hegel says somewhere, there is a form and content of both form and content. For example, if we simply try to call the structure of language its form and the communicated meaning its content then we will be led to see that the structure of language can only arbitrarily be called "formal". It has a content or material substance (words and sounds) and relations between terms or sounds as its form. In the same sense the communicated meaning has a content (what is said) as well as the form in which it is said, its style or genre. These interrelations would hold outside of language proper and apply to any semiological system. Therefore, in studies of film we have a specific substance (images and sounds) which are given a certain kind of arrangement or order (form) through specific techniques (cuts, camera movements, etc.). This all expresses both a content (the film's "story") as well as a form (the film's style or type—neo-realist, surrealist, cinema verité, etc.).[6]

With such a conception, a whole debate evaporates in confusion. For example, Lukacs frequently fails to distinguish between "form" in the sense of techniques for the production of specific effects and "form" as *genre* or mode of expression. Therefore, he uses "realism" to stand for both the effect produced by the linear narrative technique (the effect of a temporal order, of the interconnectedness of a linear order, of contiguous and contextual emphasis—metonymic—rather than substitutive emphasis on similarity—metaphoric) and the surface form, or *genre* of the nineteenth century novel—with its traditional treatment of character, event, story, etc. Even though Brecht continues to use the concept of "realism," he at least intuited that what is "realistic" is not the particular *genre* (which is merely what the audience sees as traditional or familiar) but the ability of art to affect the audience's understanding of its world—to lay bare the acceptable and make the familiar strange. Robbe-Grillet is certainly justified in arguing that at a certain point the

6. C. Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

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term "realism" is simply meaningless since every writer views himself as a "realist"—it simply serves to conceal from himself and his audience his artificiality. It is impossible not to say "something"—even if, as in Adorno's discussion of lyric poetry, it is precisely the purity of the form. That "something" must be *produced*, not pictured or recorded, through literary devices and techniques—through the raw material of language and signs.

In fact, the truly "bad" literature is one that conceals itself, feigning its objectivity (as in the "phony" film that tries to conceal its editing or camera selection—to be "realistic"—by *employing techniques* of hand-held cameras or panning shots) by concealing that the object is *constituted*, rather than given. The notion of "device" brings in the most important point of Formalist studies on literature—the "defamiliarization" effect. "It is particularly instructive to compare the theory of Shklovsky with that of Brecht which bears the same name: the theory of the so-called 'alienation effect' (where the German *Verfremdung* literally means estrangement, like Shklovsky's Russian equivalent)... The effect of habituation is to make us believe in the eternity of the present, to strengthen in us the feeling that the things and events among which we live are somehow 'natural,' which is to say permanent. The purpose of the Brechtian alienation-effect is therefore a political one...it is...to make you aware that the objects and institutions you thought to be natural were really only historical: the results of change, they themselves henceforth become in their turn changeable" (Jameson, p. 58).

In this sense, the crucial distinction in literature is not realism vs. formalism (to say nothing of materialism vs. idealism) but in the political effects of the work; between a literature which functions to provide an illusory solution and suppression of contradictions (whether the classical narrative novel or socialist realism) and literature which "lays bare the device." In defamiliarizing its object, integral literature reveals both the processes in whic experiences are ordered and the social limits placed on those experiences—but only within literature and language. Recently (Joyce, Kafka, Musil, or *le nouveau roman*), this has necessitated a direct attack on the novel, a critical reflection on literary forms which has produced a consciousness of language itself—not as style but as device. This had happened earlier for poetry, for internal reasons, and was accomplished in a modified form for theater by Brecht and Piscator.

From this viewpoint it is easier to see the reasons for the violent reaction against these directions by orthodox Marxist literary critics. This includes Lukács' attacks on the formalist, which was at least in the form of reasonable arguments (for some examples of the unbelievable crudity, offensiveness and irrationality of the attacks one can consult Erlich). Not only was the whole view of the artist and art being challenged by the formalist heresies but so was the relevance of the mechanical infra-structure superstructure analysis: an analysis always accompanied by a sociological reductionism which assigned an immediate social referent for each literary form and a social *task* for the artist. Just as the discoveries of greater complexity in historical time (with the rejection of linear evolutionary stages), pre-capitalist modes of production and cultural reproduction made the simplistic architectural image of an economic "base" inadequate, so greater knowledge concerning language, and its role in literary production, made the rigid reflection theory wholly inapplicable—and it was appropriately replaced by dogma. With their emphasis on "estrangement," the formalists in literature were not arguing for

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literature as wholly autonomous or "for its own sake." If anything, they more clearly showed that literature is produced because of contradictions, rather than in spite of them. But these contradictions were embedded in language and, therefore, formed a relatively autonomous ideological effect which would not have a point by point correspondence to other levels of social contradiction.

But beyhond the limitations of the formalists these intentions were carried further by the *Opojaz* group, whose literary histories and morphologies, along with the Prague school's social theory of communication and information, is a main influence on French structuralism in general—and apparently on Jameson in particular. As is well known, both Troubetzkoy and Jakobson are major influences on Lévi-Strauss' work (Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss met at the New School during the war and this produced a major shift in Lévi-Strauss' research and approach to anthropology). Roland Barthes, and the theoreticians around the journal *Tel Quel*, were very influenced by Propp's morphological studies and the problem of narrativity. Jameson also puts most of his emphasis on the *Opojaz* group and their attempts to develop a concept of literary history through theories of verse and prose narration. In these studies a narrative structure could be abstracted from a series of works—fairy tales for example— and modifications could be followed in this structure rather than the details of the stories. Jameson compares this approach with Lévi-Strauss' *Mythologies* and A. Greimas' "elementary structures of meaning"—which is a general theory of any narrative structure.[7] The argument was that since there were autonomous language systems at work in literature—that these were literary devices—there could not be a direct cause and effect relation of a given literature to economic or class phenomena. The mediations of language create levels of irreducibility. The "closest" mediations were what the Prague and *Opojaz* group called "everyday life" systems of popular language, dialect or oral traditions. These could then connect to other non-literary phenomena. For example, one structuralist did a study of book publishing and distribution to be more specific about the relation between a literary work and its place of origin. The problem was that such a sociology of form required concepts such a relative autonomy, totality, non-linear causality or hegemony, i.e., a Marxist theory which was not yet available or which was being systematically destroyed.

Jameson seems to agree that a simple historicism is inadequate and that mediation does introduce a relatively autonomous or permanent aspect—which is what constitutes the concept of poetics. Literary, political and economic systems are never isomorphic and therefore there must be a knowledge specific to each, with a specific concept of their conjuncture and contradictions. If one sets aside for the moment that Jameson utilizes form and content in a sense that has already been criticized, the following quote is a clear statement of this program in literary history. "The development of the historical novel as a form is dependent on the adequate state and availability of its raw materials. In good Formalist fashion these raw materials are

7. Recently Jameson has attempted to apply the analysis of narrative structures (as found in Lévi-Strauss' study of mythemes and Greimas' semantics) to Seber's sociology in "Narrative Structure in Max Weber," *New German Critique* 1 (Winter 1973). It is a rather forced analysis which seems to violate the very strictures placed on narrative structure by both Lévi-Strauss and Greimas. Such highly formal analyses require material formed through innumerable repetitions (usually authorless) and basically fictitious.

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not simply knowledge of the past, availability of documents...but rather consciousness of the past and historical sensibility... An adequate picture of literary evolution, in its relationship to other extra-linguistic system, is, I think, possible on this condition: that content, available raw material, be seen, not as mere inert lumber, but as that which favors or impedes the development of the literary form which makes use of it. At that point, the closest extra-literary system in question can itself be interrogated on its relationship to its own neighboring systems. Thus, to...the degree to which a given society...has retained, for instance, oratorical usages and values, is itself a function of the economic and social development of the society and can be investigated accordingly" (Jameson, pp. 94-96).

It is interesting that while Jameson seems to be deeply influenced by the structuralist concept of a sociology of form, his own objections to what he pictures as a general structuralist model are a recourse to the argument through homology that he previously seemed to reject. Actually, Jameson poses two objections. First, he considers the linguistic model to be inherently non-reflexive, in line with his analysis of Saussure's formalism. "A theory of models cannot recognize itself for a model without undoing the very premises on which it is founded." However, it has been suggested that Jameson's ascription of Saussure's model to all structuralism is both historically and theoretically overly simple and that self-reflexivity involves rejecting the highly formal and abstract distinctions in Saussure's theory, and introducing a social and communicative content. The point is that there is nothing about the study of language which is inherently non-reflexive—in fact, language is only possible because it can talk about itself. Jameson's second critique is sociological and involves the use of homology between a theory and a social situation. "The deeper justification for the use of the linguistic metaphor...lies in the concrete character of social life, of so-called advanced countries today, which offer the spectacle of a world from which nature itself has been eliminated, a world saturated with messages and information, whose intricate commodity network may be seen as the very prototype of a system of signs. There is therefore a profound consonance between linguistics as a method and that systematized and disembodied nightmare which is our culture today" (Janeson, pp. viii-ix). Besides implying a naive opposition between "nature" and the commodity network, it is hard to make sense of such a criticism. Marx had argued that the concept of labor was only possible once labor had historically transformed itself into a commodity separated from all familial and organic relations. Does this imply some complicity between Marx's ability to use the concept of abstract labor and the evils of capitalist appropriation? The argument seems to confuse the historical conditions which make knowledge possible and the ideological justifications for certain historical conditions. The implicit appeal here for "natural" aspects of life denied by industrialization is a hopelessly abstract way of comprehending the basis of a critical theory. Also, why are the messages and information a nightmare, why aren't they also seen in their potential expansion of liberation? As Enzensberger clearly shows in *The Consciousness Industry*, as long as Marxism continues to apply the obsolete categories of "manipulation" to media, by appealing to more "natural" forms of communication, it merely confesses to its impotence. As the enormous expansion of information and media marks a significant factor in struggles for liberation, and in the functioning of ideology, a general

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semiology becomes all that more important.[8] Finally, it seems that a more balanced and positive view of the political impact of a science of poetics is offered by Barthes. "Technically, as Roman Jakobson has defined it, the 'poetic' (i.e., the literary) refers to that type of message which takes as its object not its content but its own form. Ethically, it is only by its passage through language that literature can continue to shake loose the essential concepts of our culture, one of the chief among which is the 'real.' Politically, it is by professing and illustrating that no language is innocent, by practicing what might be called 'integral language' that literature is revolutionary."[9] With the loss of the writers' innocence goes the grand conception of literature as transcendence, the sepulchre of culture, and it is replaced by the more politically accurate view that literature is produced from historical contradictions as *mediated by language*. This loss in the illusions of the author's power is compensated by new demands that Benjamin already saw in Brecht. "The art of the epic theater consists in producing astonishment rather than empathy. To put it succinctly: instead of identifying with the characters, the audience should be educated to be astonished at the circumstances under which they function."[10]

Robert D'Amico

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8. It seems that the effect of positivist indoctrination has been to declare a science of poetics impossible. In the excellent article on "The New Criticism," *Telos* 20 (Summer 1974), John Fekete tries to make the following criticism of a science of poetics. "The acceptance of science as the defining form of reference for the constitution of a poetics leads to a categorical error. While 'cognition' is the adequate category for comprehending the specificity of science...it is not adequate for grasping the specificity of art" (p. 30). It is very hard to see what categorical error is involved here. Would one argue that an irrational social institution can only be studied irrationally, or an emotional phenomena emotionally? That literature produces aesthetic rather than cognitive effects has nothing to do with whether or not the production of these effects can be understood. The argument for a unique "comprehension" is a concession to the positivistic mystification of reason.

9. Barthes, "Science vs. Literature," *Structuralism: A Reader*, ed. Michael Lane (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), p. 411.

10. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 150. Literary criticism that is trying to develop these points can be found in the following two works: J. Leenhardt, *Lecture politique du roman* (Paris: Editions du Minuit, 1973), which combines a sociological and a semiological analysis of Robbe-Grillet's novella, *Jealousy*; and D. Wellerschoff, *Literatur und Lustprinzip* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer und Witsch, 1974), who develops the notion of alienation-effect and "irritation" in literature, which he applies to both the *nouveau roman* and the evolution of the detective novel.

Raya Dunayevskaya, *Philosophy and Revolution, From Hegel to Sartre, and from Marx to Mao*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1973.

Throughout *Philosophy and Revolution* Raya Dunayevskaya never loses sight of freedom and revolution which is the driving force of Hegelian Marxism in its clash with historical and political institutions organized upon the separation of theory and praxis. "We may not be on the threshold of revolution, but the fact that the *idea* revolution simply refuses to be silent even when we are not in a prerevolutionary situation speaks volumes about the philosophical-political maturity of our age. We may not have a Hegel or a Marx or a Lenin, but we do have what no other age has had in such depth—the movement from *praxis* whose quest for universality does not

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stop with practice but hungers for a uniting of theory and practice. It is this—and therein lies the uniqueness of the dialectic—which resists any retrogression within the revolution. Retrogressionism seeks to particularize tasks, to 'fix' the universal, to confine the tasks of the masses to 'making' the revolution and not bothering their heads about 'self-development' " (p. 285). This is the critical legacy from which revolution can always draw in order to expose alike conservative, liberal and left authoritarian ideologies and state-systems. "Marxism," she says, "is a theory of liberation or it is nothing." In *Marxism and Freedom* Dunayevskaya revealed the foundations of this theory of liberation in Marx's critical analysis of classical political economy, French revolutionary socialism and German Idealism, understood against the historical background of the period from 1776 to 1831. She made clear the continuous development of the class struggles and civil wars from the time of the Paris Commune, the American Civil War, and the Russian revolution to the latterday events of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Africa and the Black revolts of America. Everywhere she has an eye for the forces of liberation and oppression, indifferent to left and right, where human liberation is at stake. Where others are disoriented, or prefer to read history piecemeal, more like an idiot's tale, Dunayevskaya gives history and politics a plot, a movement which is always there so long as some men are without freedom and others pretend to offer it, or else blindly refuse it. Dunayevskaya understands that history is made by men and women in the streets more often than by men in their studies. For this reason, she never loses sight of what is going on around her. Of course, not everyone will see what she sees—some closer, some further, some more skeptically than her, but what is at stake is not the problem of illusions so much as the need for vision in the contemporary political world.

As early as 1958, Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom* made abundantly clear the relevance of Hegelian thought for Marxist politics. This message has now been absorbed to suit both the slow pace of academic Marxist discussion and the cruel swiftness of Soviet counter-revolution in East Central Europe. Surely, if anyone stood Hegel on his feet it was Hegel himself, rooted firmly in the ground of revolutionary history where Marx could meet him. It took *Diamat* to separate Marx and Hegel in the upsydownsy land of Soviet state oppression. Dunayevskaya tirelessly exposes the collapse of the Second International as the real context of the separation of revolutionary theory and practice. Commenting on the fate of Marx's early writings, she remarks, "It is that actual world of Russia with its forced labor camps that compels this Russian attack against Marxism. It is not the idealism of Hegel that threatens their existence in theory even as the working class does in life" (*Marxism and Freedom*, p. 63). Dunayevskaya speaks clearly where others, Sartre, Camus, and Merleau-Ponty, for example, agonized for the longest time. In the context of the cold war, the French Left might be excused for hesitating between American and Soviet imperialism. In the new context of detente, the need to speak clearly is even more imperative—and in this the bond between Hegel and Marx is the strongest link in the chain of human freedom and revolution. Since the struggle for the human mind outweighs the significance of the orientation of the Marxist mind bent to Party directives and academic prejudices, Dunayevskaya's faith is in the praxis of the people, which is there beneath the twist and turns of doctrine, state oppression and economic exploitation and calls for an end to *pre*-history: "No concept of Marx's is less understood, by adherents as well as enemies, than one of his most original ones—the

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concept of *praxis*. It is true that Marxists never stop talking about it. But, first, their very translation of it as 'practice' robbed *praxis*, as an activity both mental and manual, of its 'critical-practical activity,' which Marx never separated from its revolutionary character. Second, as each historic period following Marx's death reinterpreted the concept to fit its specific situation, the alleged obviousness of the concept of practice of the class struggle, of revolution, did not stop so-called Marxists from confining the class struggle within the bounds of reformism. Third, up to 1914—and this is the most crucial factor in the vitiation of the concept of *praxis*—it was not only the reformists who proceeded to remove 'the dialectic scaffolding' of Marx's philosophy of liberation. Revolutionaries also considered philosophy, if not as a mere adjunct to the theory of proletarian revolution, certainly not as calling for a split in the Second International. The only revolutionary who felt a compulsion to return to the Hegelian dialectic as a preparation for proletarian revolution, as a method for merging with the self-activity, self-movement, self-development of the masses that became the 1917 revolution, was Lenin. Naturally, once 1917 became fact, theoreticians followed, but they never stopped thinking that they initiated it" (pp. 264-265).

The genius of Lenin, as of Marx, is to have dealt with everyday events in terms of a theoretical concern which made it possible to discern overall trends in the profusion of facts and details with which history overwhelms us. The merit of Dunayevskaya's *Philosophy and Revolution* is that it never loses its grip upon the central revolutionary impulse of proletarian politics, whatever the stage and context of their development. Some will find criticism with her vision of a global revolutionary movement from Peking to Detroit, embracing workers, women, students and blacks. The analysis of particular revolutionary situations surely gets lost in such a canvas. Yet, however it is determined in particular cases, the core of Dunayevskaya's argument is its orientation to the actuality of the proletarian revolution. This is the ultimate test of Marxist thought in times when so many are disoriented, either adjusting to the repressive tolerance of the left in the advanced capitalist world, or else adjusting to the brutalization of Soviet politics—in either case, marginalizing or romanticizing the Third World, idolizing Mao.

What provides the strength of *Philosophy and Revolution* is the very same thing as its weakness, namely, its vision of human emancipation. Despite Althusser's recent efforts, there can hardly be any question now of the suppression of the philosophical basis of Marx's economic and political writings, except as the praxis of state socialism or as a failure of individual nerve. Apart from such ideological distortions, there is perhaps a middle ground of dispute between Marxists in the humanist camp over the revolutionary praxis of the proletariat. Thus Marcuse, for example, is more skeptical than Dunayevskaya of the revolutionary potential of the working class, whether black or feminine, with the ideological organization of monopoly capitalism. The integration of the working class into advanced industrial capitalism has, of course, turned many analysts to look at the external proletariat of students, blacks and women to achieve an orientation to the everyday events of the capitalist and socialist worlds which will not sacrifice the basic Hegelian Marxist striving towards human emancipation.

Dunayevskaya has a keen sense of the political movements that keep philosophy alive. The claim to greatness in politics is often a matter of historical vision: he who lacks it is lost. Yet the same is true of the wholly visionary politician. The great

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politician, therefore, must belong to his times—not slavishly, but openly inspecting its demands. This is the appeal of Lenin and in this he has served as a model to many thinkers who have felt the need to achieve a basic orientation within the drift of Marxism and world politics. In this regard, Raya Dunayevskaya's appeal to Lenin joins with similar efforts by Lukács, Merleau-Ponty, and Althusser, whom she rightly dismisses (pp. 302-303), though of course, they all come to different ends. Merleau-Ponty turned to Lenin when reflecting upon the problematic of the relation between humanism and terror. The context of this argument was the eve of the cold war imperialisms of America and the Soviet Union. Although many will not understand his argument, Merleau-Ponty tried to save Marxist humanism from the partisans of liberalism and Communism: it cost him, and Camus later, the friendship of Sartre. Sartre's voice is, as Dunayevskaya argues, a far cry from Lenin's attempts to explain to the people the necessity for shifts in the strategy of the revolution in a way which employed dialectics as the living expression of consciousness and freedom, transcending provincialism and chauvinism.

In his *Lenin*, Lukács has argued that Lenin's practical ingenuity or political genius must be understood in terms of his superior theoretical abilities. "The basis of this theoretical superiority is that, of all Marx's followers, Lenin's vision was least distorted by the fetishist categories of his capitalist environment. For the decisive superiority of Marxist economics over all its predecessors and successors lies in its methodological ability to interpret even the most compelx questions which, to all appearances, have to be treated in the most purely economic (therefore, most purely fetishist) categories, in such a way that behind these categories the evolution of those classes whose social existence they express becomes visible." The theoretical brilliance of Lenin's analysis of imperialism lies in his grasp of national liberation movements as products of the world economy created by monopoly capitalism which, provided the proletariat can transform imperialist wars into civil wars, becomes a genuinely revolutionary period. Thus, Lenin was able to reject Revisionism and Opportunism in the International because they failed to understand how the class implications of imperialism, when grasped in their specific dialectical implications, were favorable by means of civil war to the proletarian revolution in Russia and elsewhere. Lukács has the same view as Merleau-Ponty of Lenin's political practice, separating it entirely from what others might regard as *realpolitik:* "Above all, when defining the concept of compromise, any suggestion that it is a question of knack, of cleverness, of an astute fraud, must be rejected. 'We must,' said Lenin, 'decisively reject those who think that politics consists of little tricks, sometimes bordering on deceit. *Classes cannot be deceived.*' For Lenin, therefore, compromise means *that the true developmental tendencies of classes* (and possibly of nations—for instance, where an oppressed people is concerned), which under specific circumstances and for a certain period run parallel in determinate areas with the interests of the proletariat, are exploited to the advantage of *both.*"

In the postscript to his essay on Lenin, Lukács repeats the argument for the unity of Lenin's theoretical grasp of the political nature of the imperialist epoch and his practical sense of proletarian politics. In trying to express the living nature of that unity in Lenin's own life, Lukács describes how Lenin would learn from experience or from Hegel's *Logic*, according to the situation, preserving in himself the dialectical tension between particulars and a theoretical totality. As Lenin writes in his *Philosophic Notebooks*: "Theoretical cognition ought to give the Object in its

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necessity, in its all-sided relations, in its contradictory movement, in- and for-itself. But the human Concept 'definitively' catches this objective truth of cognition, seizes and masters it, only when the Concept becomes 'being-for-itself' in the sense of practice." What Dunayevskaya makes abundantly clear is that it was by turning to Hegel that Lenin sought to find a way to avoid making theory the mere appendage of state practice, while reserving to practice a more creative political role than the retroactive determination or revision of ideology. But this meant that Marxist materialism could never be the simple enforcement of political will, any more than political will could be exercised without a theoretical understanding of the specific class relations it presupposed. Thus Lenin remarks that "The standpoint of life, of practice, should be first and fundamental in the theory of knowledge.... Of course, we must not forget that the criterion of practice can never, in the nature of things, either confirm or refute any idea *completely*. This criterion too is sufficiently 'indefinite' not to allow human knowledge to become 'absolute,' but at the same time it is sufficiently definite to wage a ruthless fight against all varieties of idealism and agnosticism."

Of course, in these later Hegelian formulations Lenin is modifying his own revision of Engels' dialectical materialism as set forth in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, thereby rejoining the challenge set to this work by Lukâcs' own *History and Class Consciousness,* as well as Karl Korsch's *Marxism and Philosophy*, both published in 1923. Lukâcs' essay on Lenin was published on the occasion of Lenin's death in 1924. What died with Lenin was Orthodox Marxism, although its dead hand was to be upon socialism for another thirty years or more. Orthodox scientific Marxism was completely undermined with Lukâcs' insight into the historically determined praxis of science. But while it is clear that scientific socialism was not ready for Lukâcs, the same must be said of the West, where only today is the critique of scientific praxis entering into a properly reflexive or critical social science.

What *History and Class Consciousness* made clear was that living Marxism is inseparable from its idealist and Hegelian legacy. This split Russian and Central European Marxism and made Lukâcs a prisoner of these very events. What emerges from these developments is that the Hegelian concept of totality furnishes a matrix for the integration of ethics and politics through the restless dynamics of man's attempt to measure his existential circumstances against the ideal of his human essence, which he achieves through the struggle against self and institutional alienations. The Hegelian Marxist totality is thus the basis for the integral humanism of Marxist social science.

This much has been established in the academic debate over the early and later writings of Marx. One would have thought that it is no longer arguable that Marxism can be separated from its Hegelian sources. Yet, recently this argument has reappeared in the influential contributions to critical theory developed by Habermas and by the structuralist readings of Marx fostered by Althusser. Although Dunayevskaya does not deal in detail with these developments, one can share her work by extending its argument in this direction. This is necessary because behind the complexity of Habermas and Althusser's arguments over Marxist social science there still lurks the problem of the relation between philosophy and revolution. If Marx can be separated form Hegel then the revolution can be handed over to the Party or else resubjectivised.

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Habermas argues that whereas Hegel and Marx in their early work moved beyond Kant into the dialectics of recognition and their mediation through language and work, they respectively fell into the aberrations of the identity of absolute knowledge and reductive materialism. The result is that Marx lacks an adequate ground for historical materialism's claim to provide a critical theory of the process of human emancipation.

Althusser is likewise concerned with the endemic regressions of Marxist Theory due to its alternation between ideological humanism and a positivist conception of material determinism. Both arguments turn upon the nature of the transition from Hegel to Marx, upon which Dunayevskaya is the more reliable guide. Habermas has his own version of the "epistemological break" which Althusser puts between Hegel and Marx. In the first thesis on Feuerbach, Marx corrected previous materialist theories with the Hegelian comment that materialism overlooks that objects are the products of human praxis. But then, according to Habermas, Marx understood praxis solely as the process of material exchange, without any relation to other symbolic synthesis, in particular, ideology, science and politics. Habermas succeeds in cutting down Marx's claim to critical theory by reducing the synthesis of economic, legal and political structures contained in the theory of historical materialism to a crude form of technological and biological determinism. By insisting upon a reductionist account of historical materialism (which, apart from overlooking what is in Marx, totally neglects Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness*), Habermas is able to argue that Marx reduced the reflexivity of sociological knowledge strictly to the processes of material production and thus fell into a postivist epistemology incapable of generating critical theory.

Habermas succeeds in making Marx an intellectual dope by suppressing the connections between Marx's analysis of economic processes and the conduct of class struggle, whereas this is the pervasive feature of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,* the *Grundrisse* and *Capital.* But Hegel fares no better than Marx, once Habermas tries to put together what he first separated. Whereas it is obvious that the dialectic of recognition is central to both the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the *Philosophy of Right,* Habermas restricts its significance to Hegel's early theological and political writings. Habermas' thesis, therefore, turns upon a special version of early Hegel, as well as Marx, each separated from the totality of their work.

Marx's critique of classical political economy, which had already been initiated by Hegel's reflections on Adam Smith and market society, is methodologically in no way below the level of critical theory. It rests upon the same intuition of the formal presuppositions of objective knowledge. But instead of bringing its argument to bear upon mathematics or physics, it deals with economics and the relativity of the institutional arrangements that make the natural sciences an analogue for economics. The error contained in Engels' positivist endorsement of scientific praxis is that he overlooks the alienation of objectivity separated from its subjective sources in the historical decision to treat nature "mathematically," as Heidegger would say. This is an error about which both Engels and Marx were quite clear with regard to the status of the economic "laws" of capitalist society. In other words, Marx and Engels ordinarily understood that the "objectivity" of capitalist conduct depended upon the reification or alienation of the motives for capital accumulation and class oppression internalized as objective vocabularies of economic action.

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All this must be kept in mind by anyone approaching Althusser's reading of Marx on behalf of Marx. We leave aside his purpose of stemming the tide of revisionism since the Twentieth Party Congress. What concerns us is the usual attempt to split Hegel and Marx, this time to cut Marx from his "ideological humanism" and to save the "specificity of Marxist theory." Althusser settles the split between Hegel and Marx on what he calls an *epistemological break.* The latter entails a decisive departure from Marx's early dependence upon Hegel's critique of bourgeois civil society, as well as Feuerbach's materialist critique of Hegel which so enchanted Marx and Engels, prior to the *German Ideology* when they "settled" their philosophical consciousness. Indeed, according to Althusser, Marx "*was never strictly speaking a Hegelian.*" This early dependence, so obvious from Marx's doctoral dissertation, and from the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,* but also in *Capital,* belongs, if we are to believe Althusser, only to the very early period of Marx's "disordered" consciousness. Even then it functioned only to produce the "prodigious reaction" required for its dissolution! With Habermas and Althusser we have to choose between Marx the dope and Marx the sick lad.

According to Althusser though this is hardly news, and is certainly more Hegelian than he seems to think, the specificity of Marxist theory lies in its theory of the overdetermination of social structures which accounts for their features of simultaneous complexity and unity. Such "structures in dominance" are the only proper referents of the notion of unity or totality in Marxist theory. The theory of the overdetermination of social structures, argues Althusser, has nothing in common either with the Hegelian unity of essence and its alienated appearances or with the monistic causality of material determinism. The Hegelian unity relentlessly negates differences which never exist for themselves and therefore can never determine any practical policy which could materially affect the development of the spiritual unity of its essence.

It hardly bears comment that a simplistic theory of economic determinism and, even more so, an otherworldly idealism makes an enigma of the whole Marxist conception of revolutionary praxis. The curious thing is that Althusser's theory of structural overdetermination, which he believes is what separates Marx from Hegel, is actually due much more to his own gloss upon the political praxis of Lenin. But it is precisely here that we need Dunayevskaya's insistence upon Lenin's relation to Hegel, as well, of course, as her own reading of Hegel. Just as she was one of the first to emphasize the importance of Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,* so now we owe to her fresh understanding of Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks,* a work which should strengthen the chain between Hegel, Marx, and Lenin. For, if we follow Althusser's denial of an Hegelian politics, how shall we understand Lenin's study of Hegel and his consequent reorientation *vis-à-vis* the phenomena of imperialism and monopoly capital, which in turn had such far reaching consequences for his own internal political strategies?

The gist of Lenin's Hegelian re-orientation is expressed in the following two passages from Dunayevskaya, and developed in greater detail her chapter on Hegelian Leninism. Let us consider them in relation to Althusser's account of Lenin's philosophical orientation. "Movement and self-movement (this NB! independent, spontaneous internally necessary movement), 'change,' 'movement,' 'impulse' to 'movement,' and to 'activity'—opposite of 'dead-being'—who would

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believe that this is the core of 'Hegelianism,' of abstract and abstruse (difficult, absurd?) Hegelianism? We must disclose this core, grasp it, save, shell it out, purify it—which is precisely what Marx and Engels have done." Upon this Dunayevskaya comments as follows: "When Lenin *began* his study of Hegel, as his *Philosophic Notebooks* show, he still felt compelled to emphasize that he is reading Hegel materialistically, instead of taking that for granted, and going on to what was *new*. By the *end* of his Hegelian studies, he wrote: 'Intelligent idealism is nearer to intelligent materialism than is stupid materialism' " (*Marxism and Freedom*, p. 169).

It was in terms of this reaction to Hegel that Lenin then proceeded to reanalyse the political significance of imperial war and the strategy of proletarian revolution. Lenin's study of monopoly capitalism, which, it will be recalled, Lukacs attributes to his "theoretical superiority," but without mentioning its Hegelian inspiration, in fact followed his *Philosophic Notebooks*. "Once Lenin saw the counter-revolution within the revolutionary movement," says Dunayevskaya, "he felt compelled to break with his former conception of the relationship between materialism and idealism. The keynote of his *Philosophic Notebooks* is nothing short of a restoration of truth to philosophic idealism against vulgar materialism to which he had given the green light in 1908 with his work on *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Necessary as that book may have been for the specific purposes of Russia—only Russia was so backward that in 1908 one still had to fight clericalism in the Marxist movement—he now includes himself among Marxists who criticized the Kantians. . . more in a Feuerbachian than in an Hegelian manner."

In his own essay on Lenin's philosophy, Althusser manages to twist these theoretical developments around the notion of *historical delay*, by which he means that Marx, Engels and Lenin, as well as Lukács and Gramsci, were all philosophically premature (i.e., for dogmatic Soviet materialism, though he doesn't say that) in their views. Indeed, this notion also allows us to argue that the union of Marxist theory with the workers' movements was similarly premature for previous stages of socialist history. Althusser alone possesses the key to the relation between the need for philosophy and the necessity of not advancing it beyond Marxist science. This solution claims to be a restatement of the unity of Lenin's philosophical and political thought. In fact what Althusser does is to interpret Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach so as to deprive philosophy of any proper domain other than as a "primitive practice" (*practique sauvage*) on behalf of the class struggle in the realm of theory. However, it is easy to miss Althusser's primitive philosophy, which, of course, leaves him open to an equally primitive politics, because by leaving aside history Althusser is able to parade an elegant structuralism which appears to have no blood on its hands. It requires little thought to contrast Althusser's structuralism with Marx's own structural models of simple and expanded reproduction which, by combining history and structuralism, revealed how capital came into the world dripping with the blood of its proletariat and colonials. Althusser cleans up Soviet ideology, only to leave the sorrows of socialist capital accumulation, aggravated perhaps by the cold war entente, without comment.

Dunayevskaya's *Philosophy and Revolution* makes a valuable contribution to the developments of Marxism that have occurred in France and Italy, as well as to the debates of East European revisionists and West German critical theorists. A particular merit of her study is its attempt to embrace developments in the U.S.,

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China and Africa. Whatever her success in this, her work suggests the need for a new Communist Manifesto. For today "*ein Gespenst geht um in Europa*"—and it is the spirit of Hegel. This is so because the contemporary problem facing socialism is still to try to understand what it means to change the world.

John O'Neill

Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, *Per Gramsci.* Bologna: Il Mulino, 1974. 427 pages.

Despite its inauspicious title, this book is not an Althusserianization of Gramsci. Macciocchi is not the least concerned with periodizing Gramsci, establishing at what point he became a scientist of the revolution, or with reinterpreting Gramsci from the viewpoint of the present strategy of the Italian (or French) Communist Party. On the contrary: she is primarily interested in vindicating the historical Gramsci from the dogmatic stranglehold of party orthodoxy that has hitherto marketed him as the theoretical missing link between the glory of the Bolshevik revolution and the gloomy bureaucratism of its outcome. Then, why such a title? The Althusserian form contradicts the polemical content. Yet, it is very appropriate since the juxtaposition of an orthodox and uncritical theoretical approach supporting a critical political thrust is not merely a conceptual ambiguity pervading the book, but Macciocchi's own predicament or, more broadly, that of a significant sector of the radical Left today. In recycling Gramsci's Marxism for French consumption (the book was originally written as a series of lectures delivered in Vincennes in 1972), Macciocchi masterfully articulates the problems created by obsolete theory for contemporary political practice.

Her two earlier books, *Daily Life in Revolutionary China* and *Letters from the PCI to Louis Althusser* already moved in this critical direction and have been largely responsible for her purge from the Party's hierarchy. She has no illusions on the matter: "...the most serious fracture between my intellectual commitment and the Party came about with regard to my interpretation of the Cultural Revolution in China, where I went in 1970—still a communist representative to the Italian Parliament—and concerning which I wrote my book which, after the break between the USSR and China...re-examined the new sense and ideological import of China for Marxist doctrine and practice, against the masquerades diffused by the Soviets on the matter" (p. 353). Naturally, her China book was immediately rated in the Communist Index and, judging from a very lively appendix dealing with her appointment in Vincennes, the French Communist Party sought to block her from teaching the course on Gramsci for which she was being hired. Yet, she remains in the Party—caught as she is between the full awareness of the Party's internal bureaucratic decadence and the impossibility of generating a meaningful political alternative to it.

Thus the book's main ambiguity is not merely conceptual, but is ultimately rooted in the very constitution of most of the European Left, and its inability to transcend Marxism-Leninism: a fundamentally sound Marxist-Leninist theory is constantly contraposed to its degenerate manifestations. Although all appearances tend to be

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vitiated, the essence, in its theoretical purity, hovers like a cloudy mist within the radical consciousness preventing it from noticing the peculiarity of such an undialectical juxtaposition. But what is Marxism-Leninism, and what does it have to do with human emancipation? A metaphysical minestrone of seventeenth century mechanical materialism, Jacobinism, abstract rationalism, and industrialized everyday life, held together by the Secret Police wherever possible and bourgeois guilt otherwise, it pollutes the mind of those who, impatient to practice, bypass rigorous theory in the mad rush to abstract negations. It is ultimately an horizon of faith in tenets no longer clearly specificed or fully understood wh'-h ultimately results in a mere stream-lining of the given. Thrust aside because of its impracticality, Marx's social individual gives way to its consumeristic counterpart. Managed by the Party, the transition to the classless society cannot take place: the dialectic of leaders and followers readily freezes into new class structures and reintroduces new modes of domination. When emancipation *by* the Party displaces self-emancipation, the revolutionary game is lost before it even begins: the future becomes a mere extension of the present.

Furthermore, hamstrung in contradictions which, in the pseudo-dialectical view, are mechanically made expressions of a reality itself interpreted by the ideology that it validates, such a theoretical travesty cannot possibly provide any concrete guidelines for practice which, in turn, becomes wholly indeterminate. Translated into Party strategy, this practical indeterminacy can only root itself in the given thus generating the cynicism of the bureaucrat and the unhappy consciousness of the militant who, unlike the former's schizophrenic predicament of having to practice one thing and think another one, must relentlessly seek to bridge theory and practice. Macciocchi clearly belongs in the second category: *Per Gramsci* is a sustained attempt to redirect the deformed practice of the Italian and French Communist Parties in a Maoist direction, via a theoretical reconstruction of Gramsci's Marxism.

Since she is one of Europe's top journalists, Macciocchi is at her best precisely when she successfully documents the break between Gramsci and the Italian Communist Party. Thus, she goes a long way in demystifying the Togliattian account of Gramsci and sharply disassociates the latter from the former. After 1929, Gramsci had begun to seriously question the new developments in Moscow. In retaliation, the Party began to systematically isolate Gramsci to the point of even ordering other Communists in the same prison to stop talking to him, thus building a prison within a prison: "that of political separation imposed upon him from far away, from his Party and from the International" (p. 37). This isolation, even more than the physical ailments, ultimately killed him: "when Gramsci, beyond the prison's bars, saw other bars, those of political suspicion, of the rising dissension between him and the Party, him and the masses: it is then that he dies" (p. 38). This, of course, is all preparatory to the reintroduction of Gramsci as "the Lenin of today, of industrial societies in which we seek a revolutionary outcome between reformist (or Menshevik) and infantile *ultragauchiste* temptations" (p. 13).

In undertaking such a reconstruction, however, her orthodox past has the upper hand and, notwithstanding her radical intentions, the result turns out to be another run-of-the-mill Party account with a Maoist twist. Thus, she uncritically presents Leninism as if it were a self-consistent, unproblematic theory, the Bolshevik tradition as fundamentally sound (at least up to Togliatti), and she keeps referring to

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Althusser's empty chatter as if it were profound Marxist theory whereas, as she herself is eventually forced to admit, Althusser—as usual—missed the boat when he read Gramsci. She claims that by the time Gramsci was incarcerated, he had already fully "assimilated the essentials of Leninism" (p. 118) so that his work merely "develops Lenin's thought" (p. 14). It never occurs to her that there may be some fundamental contradictions between Lenin's *What Is to Be Done?* and *State and Revolution, Materialism and Empiriocriticism* and the *Philosophical Notebooks*, and that if Gramsci had been familiar with such mechanical aberrations as *What Is to Be Done?* and *Materialism and Empiriocriticism*, he would have hit the roof. Macciocchi uncritically quotes Togliatti to the effect that, by 1922 in Russia, "Gramsci was already aware of all of these works" (p. 115). But how could he be? He did not read Russian and most of these things were not available in any other language. Furthermore, while Gramsci was in Russia he certainly had more important things to do than to philosophize about Lenin's early works: not only were major political issues on the agenda, but more importantly, Gramsci was also busy chasing his future wife.

In perpetuating the Italian Communist Party's myth of Gramsci as the Italian footnote to Lenin, Macciocchi remains caught within the ideological cobwebs that she is so vigorously trying to clear away. In fact, Gramsci was an *immensely better* theoretician than Lenin: his concrete historical analyses and philosophical considerations make Lenin's idiocies in *Imperialism* and *Materialism and Empiriocriticism* look even worse than the rest of the Second International's theoretical corpus of which they are an inextricable part. Whereas in Lenin the Hegelian dialectic, or what Dunayevskaya calls the revolutionary essence of Marxism, makes only sporadic appearances, Gramsci is throughout Hegelian so that his commentators are never embarrassed into having to explain away lapses into dogmatism and crude mechanistic materialism such as *Left-Wing Communism*, *What Is to Be Done?*, etc. In Gramsci the subject never becomes completely absorbed in the logic of the object thus turning into a means for bureaucratic manipulation. The subject remains throughout the beginning and ending of Gramsci's revolutionary thought—unlike in Lenin who, as the Flerons, George, Carlo, Dunayevskaya and others have convincingly shown, is intrinsically ambiguous and cannot be altogether exonerated from Stalinist aberrations (and those of the Italian and French Communist Parties). Contrary to Macciocchi's intention, the politically relevant task today is to stress the differences rather than the similarities between Lenin and Gramsci. In perpetuating the PCI ancestral worship, Macciocchi unwittingly reintroduces Gramsci as the inconsequential theoretical idol that he has hitherto been presented as, thus effectively occluding the most relevant aspects of his heritage.

What is Gramsci's heritage? With the exception of some anti-bureaucratic positions (pp. 240-244) and certain affinities with the Chinese experience, Macciocchi's Gramsci is not significantly different from official communist versions. The themes of hegemony, the Southern question, the historical bloc, and the intellectuals are merely spiked with Maoist ideological moonshine and, sandwiched between the book's opening de-Togliattification and the closing blast against French academic scholasticism, they turn out as xerox copies of what she is trying to combat. Macciocchi reifies Gramsci's Marxism to the level of a universally valid a-historical political theory thus violating the first tenet of Gramsci's "absolute

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historicism" whereby theory, science and knowledge in general are systematically liquified into concrete social relations so that not only are they necessarily historically transient, but their validity is ultimately a function of their ability to mediate the changing rather than the contemplation of the world. Thus, an account of Gramsci *per Gramsci* cannot merely juxtapose his ideas—rooted in 1920s Italian capitalism—to 1970s Europe. Gramsci's Marxism today is *critical theory*.

All of Gramsci's ideas are the revolutionary otherness of *entrepreneurial* capitalism, which cease to be politically relevant as soon as *oligopolistic* capitalism imposes itself after its Fascist, Nazi, or New Deal birth-pangs. The notion of the organic intellectual as the revolutionary technician organizing the industrial proletariat is defused of its subversive charge as soon as labor unions become integrated as internal control mechanisms in an advanced capitalist context where the market has practically disappeared and prices and wages must now be set no longer by Adam Smith's hidden hand, but by the very visible process of labor struggles. In such a situation the Gramscian organic intellectual readily turns into another bureaucratic functionary fully committed to the perpetuation of existing social relations *unless* its revolutionary essence is disengaged from its obsolete and integrated manifestations in order to be redefined in terms of new socio-historical conditions. The integration of the organized proletariat within the logic of social capital redistributes the system's ineliminable negativity over all of culture and everyday life. Relations of domination become internalized and institutionalized within the new capitalist totalization so that the system's proletarian Achille's heel disappears only to expand as a social leprosy over the whole political body: the function of the organic intellectual thus is to develop a counter-culture which, unlike its psychedelic 1960s preview, could concretely generate social alternatives to the present insanity. The same can be said of hegemony which, no longer left in the hands of party technicians, becomes connected with the articulation of the new forms of negations.

To the extent that Macciocchi wrote her book for a French audience not too well acquainted with Gramsci's work, it may have a salutary function. As a "radicalization" of interpretations of Gramsci, however, it is a sad failure. Aside from upsetting a few official communist bureaucrats, this book adds very little.

Paul Piccone

Christian Riechers, *Antonio Gramsci: Marxismus in Italien*. Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlangstalt, 1970. 254 pages.

Juan Rodriguez-Lores, *Die Grundstruktur des Marxismus: Gramsci und die Philosophie der Praxis*. Frankfurt am Main: Maiko Verlag, 1971. 99 pages.

Gerhard Roth, *Gramscis Philosophe der Praxis: Eine neue Deutung des Marxismus*. Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1972. 250 pages.

A perplexing aspect of the reconstruction of the history of critical theory has been the persistent difficulty of assimilating the pivotal work of Antonio Gramsci. This is

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not to dissent from Schroyer's advice that "a return to the origins of critique should not become an antiquarian exercise in the exegesis of the sacred texts of the critical tradition—knowledge of Hegel, Marx, Lukács, Gramsci, etc., will not restore the telos...of critical theory."[1] Nor is it to make the ahistorical and un-Gramscian claim that the Gramscian analysis of specific questions—such as that of intellectuals or hegemony—provides us with ready-made tools for the analysis of advanced societies.[2] Yet the fashioning of such tools must come to terms with Gramsci or fall prey to the naive re-inventions of historical ignorance. While the mainstream of "critical" or "Western" Marxism dates from the stimulus of the early Lukács in his struggle to come to terms with the Second International and the surprise of the Russian Revolution, there is a second stream represented by Gramsci. Despite the fragmentariness of Gramsci's own work and the unevenness of the studies of those who have sought to preserve it, there is little question that he allows us to pose questions obscured, undeveloped or unasked within the Frankfurt tradition or the various "schools" of Parisian Marxism.

Unfortunately, the German-speaking world which gave birth to critical theory has almost totally neglected—and strangely enough, more so than in French and English—Gramsci's contributions until very recently. Such a cross-fertilization was not possible, of course, until after World War II when his writings began to appear in Italy. Yet, symptomatically, in Habermas' *Theorie und Praxis* (1963), we find no reference to Gramsci, the man who termed his theory as the "philosophy of praxis." Only with the publication of a volume of selections from Gramsci translated by Christian Riechers in 1967 and followed by an interpretive study in 1970, did the affinities between Gramsci, Lukács and Korsch draw wider attention. But the inadequacies of this introduction would quickly mislead Alfred Schmidt in his study on Althusserian "structuralism." Nevertheless, Schmidt did discover with a tone of surprise that the essential elements of Gramsci's "absolute historicism" "belong—something which has scarcely been noted previously—directly within the purview of the critical theory conceived by Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse in the 1930s."[3]

As the first major study in German on Gramsci, Riechers' *Antonio Gramsci: Marxismus in Italien* was able to sow initial confusion with its self-conscious iconoclasm in attacking popular images of Gramsci on the Left.[4] Riechers sought to

1. Trent Schroyer, *The Critique of Domination* (New York, 1973), p. 17.

2. For a fuller elaboration of this point, cf. Paul Piccone, "Gramsci's Hegelian Marxism," *Political Theory* II (January 1974), pp. 42-43. On the other hand, Maria-Antonietta Macciocchi in her *Pour Marx* (Paris, 1974) finds the tools a bit too ready-made, despite her constant invocations to tie praxis to the concrete historical situation. Her agile sliding back and forth between the situations of China, Italy and France leaves some doubt that she fully appreciates the historically unique characteristics of the crisis of advanced Western societies.

3. Alfred Schmidt, *Geschichte und Struktur* (Frankfurt am Main, 1971), p. 101. More recent discussions of the concept of "praxis" in Germany seem to point to the centrality of Gramsci and his affinity with critical theory without hesitation. See, for instance, Hans Jörg Sandkühler, *Praxis und Geschichtsbewusstsein* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973).

4. Riechers is singled out by Macciocchi as "le chef de fille de cet 'academisme' de gauche verbeux, qui a chargé Gramsci de toutes les fautes théoriques..." *op.cit.*, p. 24. Amazingly enough, one of Italy's leading extra-parliamentary Left journals, *Quaderni Piacentini*, has published an article by Giacomo Marramao—"Per una Critica dell'ideologia di Gramsci"—which is, like Schmidt, based on Riechers' distortions and mistranslations. But whereas Schmidt, a German, can be excused for having had to rely on Riechers account, the same cannot be said of Marramao who is Italian and has access not only to the original texts, but to

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discredit Gramsci as a point of departure for moving beyond the Marxism of the Second International and Diamat. He confesses to having initially shared this view, considering Gramsci "unorthodox" but still a major theorist of the "Marxist School." Yet, in the course of preparing a German edition of his writings, this attitude changed dramatically as he came to see how the traditional view had been created through a series of unusual circumstances—especially the Gramsci legend within the Italian Communist Party and its own mystified early history.[5] Immersion in historical sources and in the full range of Gramsci's writings showed Riechers "an unbroken coherence:" the roots of Gramsci's thought in Italian idealism and "bourgeois" Marxism had been previously overlooked. As a consequence, his writings had been for years *falsely* associated with Marxism (pp. 5-6).

Riechers' reading of Gramsci turns upon two underlying interpretive assumptions: a militantly anti-idealistic dialectical materialism (echoes of Plekhanov and Althusser) and a "Bordigist" conception of the party in Italian politics. Presumably, Riechers derived his inspiration from those elements of the Italian extra-parliamentary Left who disinherit Gramsci as the "father of social democracy."[6] A detailed account of how such a framework of interpretation distorts and understanding of Gramsci would be pointless, especially since Roth's study provides an explicit rejoinder. Yet, there may be a certain value in setting out some of the basic lines of the argument to indicate how, through a kind of dialectical reversal, Riechers' absurdities can be reconciled as evidence for the interpretations of Roth and Rodriguez-Lores, where the "philosophy of praxis" is characterized as a turning point in the history of Marxist theory.

In the first part of his study Riechers traces the sources of Gramsci's thinking in turn-of-the-century Italian Marxist discussions and his experience during the first World War and later as a Communist Party leader. The second, longer part of the volume consists of 11 chapters which develop disparate themes in the *Prison Notebooks* which support the thesis that Gramsci be viewed as a "subjective idealist" (with "Bogdanovian" tendencies) in theory and a Bernsteinian "revisionist" and Italian nationalist—"the last of the great ideologues of the Italian democratic tradition" (p. 243)—in practice.

The sketchy biographical chapters intend to show that Gramsci's persistent concern with "culture" represented a manifestation of the idealistically contaminated milieu of pre-World War I Italian "bourgeois" Marxism (p. 39). From this perspective Richers can take details such as the remarkable liberality of the school system evident in a 1910 essay and reverse their significance: such conditions "did not exactly facilitate the formation of a Marxist-oriented consciousness" (p. 37). For others, however, this is the kind of evidence required to explain how Gramsci could

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the growing literature on the subject. For a forceful refutation of Marramao's travesty, see Peter Polka (who has written an interesting thesis on Gramsci at the University of Köln in 1972, *Marxistische Philosophie der Praxis und wissenschaftlicher Sozialismus in Italien*) in his "Gramsci in Germania," in *Utopia*, Vol. II, 7-8 (July-August, 1972), pp. 9-14. Unfortunately, a well-balanced journal such as *Utopia* has since ceased to exist, while *Quaderni Piacentini* plods along.

5. The destruction of this mystified history is Macciocchi's objective in *Pour Gramsci* where she seeks to rehabilitate him as a revolutionary theorist rather than, as Riechers, debunking him as a social democrat.

6. Cf. Macciocchi, *op.cit.*, p. 41.

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emerge from such an impoverished provincial environment with such extraordinary intellectual resilience. Further, Gramsci's writing style becomes a symptomatic manifestation of an irrepressible bourgeois mentality; his early journalism is characterized as so incomprehensible as to have provoked protest from workers and is accordingly chastized by Riechers as "ein polemischer, von idealistischen Fragestellungen ausgehender philosophischer Feuilletonismus" (p. 44). For others Gramsci is singled out for his analytical precision that departs from the overblown essayistic style of the traditional Italian intellectual. A final example: Gramsci is charged with a romantic activism at one point, then a subjectivistic withdrawal at another. Thus, rather than engage himself in the revolutionary propaganda required by the labor unrest generated by a good shortage in Turin in late 1917, he would "withdraw" to discuss moral and social problems taken up by bourgeois writers (p. 47). Here Riechers fails to note that the Turin socialist movement was in shambles, crushed by martial law enforced by the military. Hence, for Fiori "the martial-law regime allowed Gramsci few outlets for organizational or propaganda work" and yet he did manage to set up a political discussion circle for young militants.[7] On the other hand, when Gramsci would later courageously take the lead in 1919 (and again in 1924-1926 at the head of the Communist Party) in establishing "workers councils" at the factory level, this is dismissed as a manifestation of a "subjectivistic" conception of organization. As a consequence Gramsci would commit the error of trying to transform the Communist Party into a "mass" party at the price of a direct struggle for political power: "These thoroughly utopian-democratic elements determined Gramsci's thought precisely at the time in which he strongly sanctioned and carried out the 'Bolshevizing' policy within his own party. His 'Leninism' exhausted itself in the mystique of ostensibly revolutionary institutions" (p. 82).

The second part of the book undertakes a wide-ranging analysis of the *Quaderni* to establish how Gramsci's bourgeois, idealist mentality prevented him from ever transcending his subjectivism and Italian parochialism and thus recognize the Party's true revolutionary function. This thesis is catalogued in chapters which develop themes such as: the parallels between Gramsci, Korsch and Lukács; the treatment of Hegel, Ricardo and Robespierre; Gramsci's "Bogdanovism;" the concept of hegemony in Lenin, Gramsci and Stalin; description of the Gramscian theory of the party as an "abstract organizational science" influenced by Sorel and Proudhon; the constraining influences of the Crocean tradition and Italian nationalism.

All this might not even be worth mentioning had Riechers book not been taken seriously as a reliable commentary on Gramsci. Alfred Schmidt does so in his *Geschichte und Struktur* (published a year after Riechers' study) with disastrous results. In his uncritical reliance upon Riechers' interpretations and translations, Schmidt fails to fully develop the contribution of Gramsci to the thesis of his own book by accepting the dismissal of Gramsci's "absolute historicism" as a pernicious "subjective idealism." Gramsci is taken up in the course of a discussion of Althusser's bifurcation of Marxian theory into dialectical and historical materialism. While Schmidt accepts this as a justifiable and within limits—unavoidable—procedure, he contents that in the form it takes for Althusser it still does not really deal with the

7. Giuseppe Fiori, *Antonio Gramsci: Life of a Revolutionary*, trans. Tom Nairn (London, 1970), pp. 112-113.

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contradictory relations of "history" and "system" in *Kapital.*[8] Instead it culminates in an "ontological backsliding [*Rückfall*]:" "for it relinquishes the fundamental insight into the historicity of [natural and] human social being."[9] Now, it is precisely at this point that Schmidt takes up Gramsci, a move which might have allowed him to explore in depth the affinity between himself and Gramsci and their common differences with Althusser. Schmidt moves a few steps in this direction but then stops short: appreciative of the congenial impulse behind Gramsci's thinking which places him beside Lukács and Korsch in their efforts to restore the philosophical dimension of Marxian thought, he sadly concludes—following Riechers and Althusser—that Gramsci's "absolute historicism" was developed "at the price of a more or less grave idealistic relapse [*Rückfall*]."[10]

Why was Schmidt led to uncritically accept this judgment? Apparently, he was completely taken in by Riechers' account, referring to it variously as a "well-informed"[11] and "sober, up-to-date, myth-destroying"[12] book. Further, he was misled by Riechers' faulty translations. The most critical one, which appears in both his Gramsci selections and his own book, involves a complete reversal of meaning in a decisive epistemological discussion. For Riechers, Gramsci's notions of "historically subjective" and "universal subjective" become transformed into "historically objective" and "universal objective"—a trick which facilitates easy affixing of the idealist label. To grasp the significance of this it is useful to refer to the full context where the English version reads as follows: "Objective always means 'humanly objective' which can be held to correspond exactly to *'historically subjective':* in other words, objective would mean *'universal subjective.'* Man knows objectively in so far as knowledge is real for the whole human race historically unified in a single unified cultural system."[13] Riechers' version translated into English would thus become: "Objective always means 'humanly objective' which can be held to correspond to the *'historically objective':* in other words objective would mean *'universal objective.'*"

What irony that Gramsci, a man so acutely aware of the importance of rigorous biographical method in the progressive reconstruction and critique of social theory, should fall victim at this late date to a form of abuse against which he struggled to defend Marx and Engels. What must Riechers have thought when he came upon these lines in the *Notebooks?* "If one wishes to study the birth of a conception of the world which has never been systematically expounded by its founder (and one furthermore whose essential coherence is to be sought not in each individual writing or series of writing but in the whole development of the multiform intellectual work...) some preliminary detailed philological work has to be done. This has to be carried out *with the most scrupulous accuracy, scientific honesty and intellectual loyalty and without any preconceptions, apriorism or partis pris.*"[14] To continue this

8. Schmidt, *op.cit.*, p. 82.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 94. Schmidt goes so far as to conclude that "this idea of a 'pure' historicity unites Gramsci in many ways with Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* and the—ontological—beginnings of Marcuse, but more especially...with the early essays of Lukács" (p. 104).
13. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York, 1971), p. 445. Cf. Riechers, *op.cit.*, p. 134.
14. Gramsci, *op.cit.*, p. 382. Emphasis added.

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prescient self-defense, Gramsci goes on to cite the example of Plekhanov's shoddy method applied to Marx. Ironically, it is to the authority of Plekhanov's theory of knowledge that Riechers turns (admitting a certain crudity in Lenin's "reflection" theory) in his critique of Gramsci's ostensible "bogdanovism" (p. 145). Let Gramsci speak for himself: "The so-called orthodox tendency, represented by Plekhanov... despite his assertions to the contrary, relapses into vulgar materialism. The problem of the 'origins' of Marx's thought has not been properly considered: a detailed study of his philosophical culture...is certainly necessary, but only as the premise for a more important study, that of his own 'original' philosophy, which cannot be exhausted by the study of a few 'sources' or his personal 'culture.' It is necessary, first of all, to take account of *his creative and constructive activity*. The way in which Plekhanov poses the problem is typical of the positivist method, and demonstrates his meagre speculative and historiographical ability."[15]

Such an account of the "creative and constructive" side of Gramsci is precisely the guiding interest behind Juan Rodriguez-Lores' *Die Grundstruktur des Marxismus* and Gerhard Roth's *Gramscis Philosophie der Praxis*. Both depart from an explicit appreciation of the implications of Gramsci's "historicism" for their own efforts at reconstructing his thought. Roth's book (an expansion of his 1969 thesis at the University of Münster) is directed by a desire to present a comprehensive presentation of Gramsci's thought, as well as single out themes of significance for revolutionary praxis in advanced capitalism. Rodriguez-Lores' volume (presented for his doctorate at Bochum) focuses more narrowly on a careful analysis of Gramsci's theory of knowledge. While neither of these two studies was able to take up Schmidt's treatment, their major theses contradict the facile assumption of Gramsci's "idealistic relapse." The distinctive feature of their analyses which makes this both possible and persuasive is the effort to define the unique tradition of Italian idealism and Gramsci's peculiar relationship to it. Whereas Riechers assimilated Gramsci into that tradition, Roth and Rodriguez-Lores show the decisive ways in which he transcended it on his way to becoming a theorist of enduring international significance.

The modest appearance of Rodriguez-Lores' *Die Grundstruktur des Marxismus* is deceptive. Within the narrow framework of a systematization of Gramsci's theory of knowledge he attempts to show the distance Gramsci moved toward re-evaluating Marxian theory as a universal philosophy encompassing both society *and* nature. The thrust of this thesis bears repeating because of the way in which it challenges the simple equation of Gramsci with Western Marxism in general, let alone the work of Lukács. The rejection of Engels' effort to make "the dialectical method" a comprehensive philosophy had turned Marxism into "simply a critical theory of society." Such a philosophy of praxis lives on in the work of Merleau-Ponty, Sartre and Marcuse. But for Rodriguez-Lores, Gramsci had in this respect "substantially distanced himself from the 'revolutionary dialecticians' of the twenties and from their later extensions in so-called 'Western Marxism.' To him the praxis principle did not mean the absolute, negative critique of rational understanding [*Verstandsdenken*] ...the praxis principle should not unconditionally displace Marxism into the defensive position of a critical theory of society. On the contrary, the dialectic resting upon the praxis principle brings about a new philosophy which need not renounce its

15. *Ibid.*, p. 387. Emphasis added.

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revolutionary conviction [*Gesinnung*] for practically, consciously, voluntaristically revolutionizing [*umzuwälzen*] society, in order to present itself as the unitary conception [*Denken*] of worldly reality—even that reality mediated through scientific understanding: *nature*" (pp. 9-10).

Rather than regressing to an idealistic historicism, as assumed by Riechers and Schmidt, the Gramsci of Rodriguez-Lores is seen as having developed a conception of praxis whose concrete dialectic aimed at nothing less than the *Aufhebung* of the prior dualism of historical and dialectical materialism, precisely because he saw how the tendency of one to be absorbed into the other had brought about the crisis of Marxism. As a consequence, he was acutely aware of the fallacies of Hegelian identity theory, the Gentilian "pure act" and the "metaphysical materialism" of dialectical materialism. From Gramsci's perspective, then, "the intellectual expression of the concrete-rational is no longer the logic of absolute reason [*Vernunft*]...rather that of the logic of the 'impure act'...which transforms the *empirical* 'structure' of history into a rational one, which is to say, into the 'cultural' and 'political' *reason* of the superstructure" (p. 30). Such arguments are developed in detail in chapters on the concept of the "philosophy of praxis" found in Labriola, Gentile, Croce and Mondolfo, Gramsci's critique of Croce and Engels, and his "theory of translation" as the hermeneutic principle underlying his conception of the Marxian theory of knowledge. While there may be some substance to Roth's charge that this isolation of the purely philosophical aspects of Gramsci's thought from the political renders his philosophy of praxis ultimately incomprehensible, Rodriguez-Lores has done Gramsci considerable service in treating him as a philosopher whose distinctive contributions have been glossed over by those who blithely associate him with individuals and positions foreign to his own conceptions.

In his *Gramscis Philosophie der Praxis* Roth self-consciously locates his study as a contribution to "critical" social theory, noting that "Gramsci, despite his important meaning for critical social theory, is still largely unknown" (pp. 9-10). He thus contents himself with locating Gramsci within the tradition of critical theory and defending him from those who dismiss his thought as "subjective idealism," rather than, as Rodriguez-Lores, stressing his uniqueness within Western Marxism. In his first chapter on "Marxism as Philosophy of Praxis," Roth provides a concise and penetrating analysis of the origins and nature of Gramsci's philosophical achievements. With explicit reference to Riechers and Althusser he persuasively disposes of their characterization of Gramsci's "absolute historicism." The discussion is elaborated in four sections: Gramsci and the tradition of the 'filosofia della prassi' in Italy; the critique of materialism and determinism; the theory of knowledge (objectivity and reality); the unity of philosophy, history and politics. Other chapters are devoted to analyses of the "State and Society" in Gramsci's political philosophy and "Revolution and Enlightenment." In the final, fourth chapter, "The 'Philosophy of Praxis' and Present-day Marxism," Roth outlines aspects of Gramscian theory relevant to contemporary discussions. The analysis remains sketchy, however, and does not quite measure up to the expectations built up in the course of the rest of the book. The question of Gramsci's actuality is delimited in two parts: first, the degree to which he contributes to the theory of revolutionary transformation, especially with reference to the Italian Communist Party; and second, to the foundation of an "anthropology" and "ethic" as the basis for revolutionary "moral-reform." Indeed this latter section is of particular interest to Roth as can be seen in some of his more

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recent work, an anthology which challenges the behavioral research of Konrad Lorenz and his "school."[16]

In sum, within the space of five years—1967 to 1972—Gramsci was suddenly catipulted into German social theory. Though the discussion was initially sidetracked by an unsympathetic translator and interpreter, it was quickly redirected. And now the German analysis of Gramsci as a social philosopher stands apart from anything now available in French or English. This constitutes an important event in rejoining the two streams of critical theory. It is also substantial evidence that Gramsci's aspiration "to accomplish something *für ewig*,"[17] was not a prisoner's lonely delusion. But it is left for us to continually re-create that enduring content through our own theoretical practices. How else can we begin to unravel within the frame of our historical horizons the concrete meaning of his oft-cited Lassallean slogan—for us bursting with epistemological and practical paradoxes—that "truth is revolutionary?"

Raymond Morrow

16. Gerhard Roth, ed., *Kritik der Verhaltensforschung: Konrad Lorenz und seine Schule* (München, 1974).

17. Gramsci, *Letters from Prison*, trans. Lynne Lawner (New York, 1973), p. 79.

Philip Rosenberg, *The Seventh Hero: Thomas Carlyle and the Theory of Radical Activism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974. 235 plus xi pages. $10.00.

An individual writes a book or a series of books. A few people read and appreciate what is written. The vast majority never reads the author's work or, if they do, misunderstand it. Consequently the author remains unknown or misread in his own lifetime. Decades pass and eventually his writings are uncovered by another generation living in a different context and facing a new set of socio-cultural problems. The author's *oeuvre* then undergoes a re-evaluation, and the author himself may even gain what he never had while he was alive: a reputation for being a meaningful and significant thinker.

This process has happened numerous times in history though not much attention has been paid to it. Vico, writing in the 1720s, remained relatively obscure until the 1790s when he was re-discovered by Herder, Goethe, and later by Michelet. Schopenhauer, who published *The World as Will and Idea* in 1819 was viewed as a crank and misanthrope until his death in 1860; only in the 1870s and 1880s did the fashionably world-weary German bourgeoisie (now intrigued by pessimism) begin to consider him a great philosopher. Kierkegaard, whose best work was done in the 1840s, was hardly known outside of Denmark until after 1900. The poet Lautremont, who published *Les Chants de Maldoror* in 1869 (before dying at the age of twenty-four) had little impace in France until he was taken up by the Surrealists in the 1920s. The list could go on. What is important here is not *that* there is sometimes a delayed reaction to a writer's work; the important question is *why* such a delay takes place at all. Is it because certain insights, which are clearly there for people to see, are not generally appreciated until a later, and much altered, social reality *forces* recognition? Or is it because the insights are not there to

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see and do not become known until another thinker points them out, usually in order to illuminate aspects of his own philosophy?

The whole issue of how and why earlier writers are reëvaluated is not merely an academic one. If approached from the proper perspective, it could reveal as much about the complexion of the age in which a re-evaluation takes place as it does about the individual being re-evaluated. This may be especially true in the case of Philip Rosenberg's recent book on Thomas Carlyle (a work which could spark a whole new wave of Carlyle studies in this country). What Rosenberg claims to see in Carlyle is a writer relevant to the present—a thinker who, as far back as the 1830s, worked out a theory of "radical activism" which may still be applicable today. If few have seen this side of Carlyle before, it is perhaps because the social conditions had never been such as to encourage this perception. With all that happened in the 1960s, however, it is possible that the present generation—shaped by novel experiences and sensitive to new forms of political awareness—might be able to view the past through new lenses. The result could be original insights into earlier thinkers which previous interpreters failed to achieve since they were writing against a different set of circumstances and for a different audience.

It should be said at once that a Carlyle re-evaluation could never take the same form as the earlier "discoveries" of Vico or Kierkegaard. In the latter two examples, the thinkers, when uncovered, were seen in a fresh light because they had not really been interpreted before. But Carlyle has already been encrusted with a century of interpretations. In order to see a "new" Carlyle it is therefore necessary to break through what must be labeled the "old opinions" or "false stereotypes" so that the *real* Carlyle can stand out in relief. In Carlyle's case, then, the already established image has to be contested and shattered before any new assertions can be made. But what is the prevailing image of Carlyle which a writer like Rosenberg is forced to contend with? It is important to know this before passing judgment on his interpretation.

There are actually two images which have to be faced. The first is that of Carlyle as a passionate romantic, railing against the mechanization of life; a man genuinely empathetic toward the poor and wholly antagonistic to the indolent rich; a figure very much like a modern Isiaih who denounces in prophetic tones the many abuses of his age. The second image of Carlyle is less flattering. It portrays him as a proto-fascist and anti-democrat, a defender of heroes and hero-worship, an uncompromising racist, an early advocate of an industrial-technological elite (the "Captains of Industry"), and a champion of British imperialism. The first of these two images predominated throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries at a time when Carlyle worship was at its height. But this view began to fade as Carlyle's work became institutionaleized in women's clubs and elementary college classrooms—a confirmation, at least to some,[1] that it lost whatever moral force it once had. Though this picture of Carlyle still lingered on, a second one also began to emerge at the time, thanks to the tendentious interpretations of right-wing authors like Ernst Seilliere in France or Schulze-Gaevernitz in Germany.[2] This image at its

1. Eric Bentley, *A Century of Hero-Worship* (Boston, 1957: second edition), p. 4.

2. See Ernst Seilliere, *La Philosophie de l'imperialisme* (Paris, 1906); and G. von Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus und englischer Freihandel* (Leipzig, 1906). These writers are briefly discussed in Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State* (New Haven, 1946), pp. 190-91, 221-22.

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worst depicted Carlyle as a philosopher of the radical Right, even as a direct precursor of National Socialism (a case built largely around Carlyle's racial biases and his fondness for Prussian militarism).[3] Since 1945, interest in Carlyle has sharply declined. Those who still write about him appear to reject the second image as perhaps unfair; at the same time they do not seem willing to go back to the first one which they view as somewhat overdone. It is in this context that Rosenberg's *The Seventh Hero* has appeared on the scene and pointed to a third way out: namely, to the discovery of the *real* Carlyle as a theorist of radical activism.

To pursue this road—that is, to try and claim Carlyle for the Left rather than the Right—is an immensely difficult task which goes against most of the Carlyle scholarship produced during the last seventy years. How, for example, do you go about rescuing a writer whom Ernst Cassirer described as a "conservative", a man intent on "stabiliz[ing] the social and political order"?[4] How do you salvage for the Left an individual whom Eric Bentley (himself a man of the Left) termed "morally dangerous" and a "tiger-cut of the rich"?[5] Even a quick glance at Carlyle's numerous works, particularly his essays, should convince one that he was by no means an innocuous writer. Some of his books contain passages against blacks, revolutionaries, and Jews. In places he argued as a matter of course that colonial populations were inferior. He also defended slavery and lamented the fact that in the American Civil War Anglo-Saxons were killing each other over a senseless "Nigger-Agony". Furthermore, Carlyle supported political repression. He believed that order and hierarchy should be secured with force, and he frequently spoke of the need for "heroes" to take command and "tell us for the day and the hour what we are to do." Examples such as these could be multiplied. The point is that there is nothing here, at least not on the surface, that lends itself to a leftist *Weltanschauung*. Yet this is what Rosenberg tries to discover and draw out of Carlyle. He does it, it seems to me, by utilizing four methods, all of which are absolutely necessary if his project is to succeed.

First, he rejects what I have called the second image of Carlyle (i.e., the precursor of fascism) by carefully explaining what Carlyle meant and did not mean by some of his more outrageous statements; Rosenberg tries to show (and in fact *must* show if he is going to be convincing) that Carlyle's intentions were good even if his language was misleading. Second, once he has dismissed the rightist view of Carlyle as unjust, Rosenberg goes back to the first image and attempts to show that it is the more accurate one; moreover, he argues that within it is contained another, neglected side of Carlyle (which turns out to be his *essential side*!), that is, the Carlyle who is a theorist of radical activism. Third, Rosenberg then reminds the reader that in the last one-hundred and fifty years some people, though very few,[6] have briefly glimpsed the "radical" Carlyle. (This is by way of indicating that his interpretation is not completely outlandish.) And finally, after all these matters are cleared away,

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3. On this see particularly Theodor Deimel, *Carlyle und der Nationalsozialismus* (Würzburg, 1936); and W. Vollrath, *Thomas Carlyle und Houston Stuart Chamberlain: Zwei Freunde Deutschlands* (Munich, 1935).

4. Ernst Casirer, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

5. Eric Bentley, *op. cit.*, pp. 5, 29.

6. Mazzini once had some good words to say about him, and so did William Morris and John Ruskin. Even Engels praised Carlyle (in his early review-essay "Die Lage Englands" [1844]) but only for his sympathy with the working class, not for his political opinions.

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Rosenberg explains that he intends to treat only fifteen years of Carlyle's life—the period between his 33rd and 48th year (1828-1843)—because only this is his radical period and therefore it alone still has relevance today. Fifteen years, with darkness on one side and the other. This method of slicing out a span of time in a writer's life an calling it significant to the exclusion of all the rest is highly dubious. Nonetheless, Rosenberg has realized that it is the only way he can make his case. He is more than aware that before 1828 there is little that suggests a radical perspective in Carlyle, and after 1843 (with four decades left to live) there is a wasteland of tendentious thinking, especially in virulently anti-democratic essays like the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (1850) or "Shooting Niagara: And After?" (1867). At a time when others have been trying to synthesize disparate periods in a thinker's life in order to see continuity (e.g., in Rousseau, Marx, etc.), Rosenberg deliberately keeps Carlyle divided into periods so he can develop his argument about the "radical Carlyle." This may not be entirely acceptable methodologically, but for out purposes here perhaps Rosenberg deserves the benefit of the doubt (at least temporarily) so he can make his case as best he can.

It seems to me that there are three possible contributions which Carlyle could make to the present: three ways, that is, in which his thought might be considered relevant. The first had to do with his *critique of liberalism*, the second with his *philosophy of clothes,* and the third with his *theory of action.*

As for the first, his critique of liberalism, it should be said that Carlyle was undoubtedly one of the most devastating critics of Benthamite liberalism in his day. He attacked in the strongest terms the prevailing liberal notions of utilitarianism and *laissez faire* economics. What's more, he saw through the naïve reformism of Bentham and his followers, and he questioned their emphasis on the ballot as a way to effect change in society. Like Marx in his essay *On the Jewish Quetion*, Carlyle inferred that voting was an illusory exercise in power since the real problems of the age may not even be amenable to political solutions. Nevertheless, as impressive as this critique was for the early nineteenth century, it does not seem very useful for the 1970s. Carlyle's insights are unfortunately not as transferable as one would hope. In fact, the liberalism Carlyle attacked is not the liberalism of today, but rather is part of a thought-system which has already been transcended by events. The importance of Carlyle's critique, then, is only historical. Taken as a whole, it does not seem capable of providing guidelines for either understanding or action in the present.

Carlyle's second potential contribution concerns his philosophy of clothes, but this remains surprisingly undeveloped in Rosenberg's book. In Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, however one can see worked out (through an elaborate set of clothing metaphors) a theory of institutions which might still be valid today. Essentially Carlyle suggested that institutions, like clothes, eventually wear out and have to be discarded. Even whole societies outgrowh their clothes (e.g., super-structural forms) if they become too binding or restrictive. When this happens the old clothing has to be ripped off and thrown away—not, however, in order to return to nakedness, but to acquire a new and more appropriate wardrobe *that fits better*. Expressed less metaphorically, this points to a theory of reification, which is always so central to any radical theory; it also suggests a rudimentary concept of revolution, for what is the tearing-off and the re-dressing if not the process of revolution itself? All of this may be important and vaguely helpful today but it is not unique to Carlyle. Marx and others at the time said the same thing but in more concrete, less poetical, terms. The usefulness of

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Carlyle's second contribution, then, must be judged as extremely limited. It may help explain why social change is needed, but it does nothing to indicate how one might actually bring it about.

The third and last potential contribution is Carlyle's theory of action. Throughout his major works Carlyle frequently expressed sentiments such as the following: "the end of Man is an Action and not a Thought," "Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by Action," "Not what I have done but what I Do is my Kingdom," and so forth.[7] These notions seem to have been developed under the influence of Goethe's *Poetry and Truth* and Fichte's *The Vocation of Man*. For this reason they also shared the limitations of such works and this severly hindered Carlyle's contribution to a theory of radical activism. Carlyle repeatedly *says* that action is essential for both human development and constructive social change but, as Rosenberg admits, he had "no conception whatsoever about what kind of action would be needed" (29). All he could advise was "do what lies clearly at hand", which was about as specific as he ever became. Consequently, there is in Carlyle no hint of a programme describing the sort of action he had in mind (except the suggestion that the working class would be better off if it simply emigrated). Needless to say, this is hardly something that can be built upon in the 1970s.

Perhaps the major problem with Carlyle's theory of action was that it lacked a social dimension. A careful reading of Carlyle shows, as Rosenberg rightly points out, that he was often indifferent to the results of an act, to its social or political consequences. Basically, Carlyle was not much interested in effects *but only in the therapeutic value of the action itself.* His primary concern, it seems, was how activity could help an individual overcome self-absorption or even self-loathing. In fact he sometimes considered action to be simply a means of escaping the urge toward self-annihilation. This conception of action, private and solipsistic in itself, is very far from the Marxian notion of *praxis* with its locus in the social world rather than in one's isolated consciousness. Furthermore, Carlyle often understood action to mean simply *work*, which is to say, productive labor of any kind. Here it appears that he may have been much closer to Calvin's ethic than to Marx's practical critical activity. "Be no longer a chaos," Carlyle wrote, "but...Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifulist infitesimal fraction of a product, produce it...with thy whole might."[8] This is precisely the type of attitude which Marx spoke out against in his *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts*; this is the essence of alienated labor, especially when few questions are asked about the conditions under which this productive work is to be performed.

Another shortcoming of Carlyle's theory of action ought to be mentioned in passing. It was this, that although he realized the *whole* was the problem, and that only a change in the totality of social relations would provide a satisfactory remedy, he had no clear notion of what to do with this insight. Marx, of course, arrived at a similar conclusion but went beyond the impasse which paralyzed Carlyle by seeing the proletariat as the material force which could transform the whole and usher in a new society. This was completely foreign to Carlyle. Though he could sympathize with the poor, he could not visualize them as class-conscious; the very idea, in fact,

7. All these quotations are from Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, ed. Herbert Sussman (New York, 1970), pp. 129, 158, 187.

8. Thomas Carlyle, *ibid.*, p. 188.

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was repulsive to him. The result was that he either fell back into a "grim passivity" in the face of suffering, or else he went the road of Feuerbach by calling for a "reform of the heart" on the part of the social elites. Eventually it seemed to him that only if those on top decided to act gratuitously and take up the cause of the poor could social wrongs be righted. "The cure," Carlyle came to believe, "must begin at the heart." What started with overtones of social involvement ended with a plea for *noblesse oblige* from the powers that be. So much for Carlyle's theory of action.

On the whole, the three aspects of Carlyle's thought which could conceivably be relevant to the present turn out on closer inspection to be not that helpful at all. The problem, of course, lies not with Rosenberg's treatment of Carlyle, but with Carlyle himself. The one place where Rosenberg's analysis does fall short, however, is precisely at the point where he most wants to succeed: *i.e.*, in convincing the reader that Carlyle posesses radical crudentials. It is extremely difficult to accept this position, not only for the reasons already mentioned but also because of certain assumptions which were integral to Carlyle's world-view—assumptions which by their very nature militated against an acceptable (or even viable) theory of social action. When these are found embedded as premises in the work of *any* thinker, it is highly unlikely that he or she could ever produce tenable guidelines for *praxis* no matter how elaborate the conceptualizations.

What are these assumptions which preclude a satisfactory view of praxical activity? There is room here to mention only four, each of which was characteristic of Carlyle's own mode of thinking.

The first is the notion that man is insignificant and all his efforts futile. Wherever this attitude is present it virtually destroys the possibility of a genuine theory of radical action. And yet it was exactly this viewpoint that pervaded much of Carlyle's best work. In writing about human affairs he tended to take a cosmic perspective and view the world from an Archimedean point outside of existence. From this field of vision all activity appeared petty, frivolous, and inconsequential. Even man himself seemed like an insignificant "conflux of two eternities." With this as a premise it was easy to conclude, as Carlyle often did, that all concerted action in the world was trivial and perhaps even a foolish waste of time. This was an unfortunate attitude to take, but it followed logically if one believed that the world was nothing more than a "narrow brickfield" when "look[ed] upon from the Fixed Stars."[9]

The second assumption is that a theory of action can be arrived at through a non-dialectical understanding of social reality. This view is unacceptable because it fails to explain how a new society is supposed to be generated out of existing relationships or what connection collective practice has to radical social change. Carlyle, as Rosenberg clearly demonstrates, never really grasped the internal dynamics of modern industrial society and as a result he failed to perceive the contradictions implicit in the whole: contradictions which, if developed, might have imploded a system no longer capable of containing them. Lacking this perspective, Carlyle was forced back upon the notion that if society were to change at all, it would have to be because of some extraordinary *outside event* (like a purgative action, or what Carlyle called "fire-creation", of a Hero yet to be born). This is why, when he looked at life around him, he saw only social *wrongs*, never social

9. Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution* (1837); cited in Rosenberg, *The Seventh Hero*, p. 32.

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possibilities. It is also why he felt the need to resort to a moral language based on reproaches and jerimands: there was simply no other way for him to criticize a sick, atrophied world without at the same time insulting and denouncing it. Marx, by contrast, looked at the same world but viewed it dialectically. Hence he was able to see signs of life, as well as the seeds of a future transformation, within the old social body. Not so Carlyle. He could only point out the illness and rail against it, not indicate how the body might proceed to cure itself *without physicians*.

The third assumption is that *if* meaningful change is to come, it has to be ushered in by some type of social elite. If this notion is accepted it is hard to see how a viable theory of *praxis* could be produced. This is particularly true in Carlyle's case. Since he believed that it was in the nature of things for a few people to lead and the rest to obey, it followed that there are only two kinds of individuals in the world: heroes and hero-worshipers. The heroes are those who have a "seeing eye" and can pentrate the "show of things." They are the ones in touch with the essential reality behind appearance because they perceive truths which remain obscure to others. (this, incidentally, is what gives them the *right* to weild power, according to Carlyle. Obviously this attitude has appeared on the Left as well as the Right in the twentieth century.) The masses, on the other hand, have a duty only to recognize heroes and submit to them. Subordination *is* greatness for the average man, or at least as close as he will ever come to it.[10] With this sort of framework it is possible to develop guidelines for a mass movement, but not for a theory of creative social practice. The upshot of Carlyle's thought is that leaders decide virtually everything and their followers nothing, and this is so even if one of the essential conditions of being a leader is that one possess some genuine concern for the masses and their needs. Such a theory ends up by being useful only to the very few (the "natural superiors", the heroes, the party, the central committee, etc.). It has little to say to others who are seen only as objects or someone else's will, ot subjects in their own right. In this respect Carlyle's view of action is truncated and incomplete, and, historically speaking, it has had disastrous consequences.[11]

The last assumption which vitiates a sound theory of practice is the rejection of *self-activity* as central to the process of social change. Without this emphasis on personal initiative and self-liberation as integral to *praxis*, one can usually expect any theory to end in manipulation on the one side, and passive acquiescence on the other. This is certainly what happened with Carlyle. His starting point was a total lack of confidence in the ability of people to do things for themselves. With this as a premise he went on to oppose democracy as a popular movement. In fact, he opposed all independent collective action to the degree that it represented the "multitudinous canaille" trying to shape the world according to their own tastes. The mass was always "vulgar," "servile," "dull-sighted," "foolish," lacking in "self-control," "insincere," "noisy," "blind," "distrustful," a "rubbish-heap" of petty desires, and so on *ad infinitum*. Nothing decent could be expected of men in general *unless* they submitted to leaders and passively obeyed them (as, according to Carlyle's

10. These ideas are spelled out in greater detail in such works as *Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1840) and *Past and Present* (1843).

11. Rosenberg attempts to infer (on the basis of two or three quotations) that Carlyle was actually interested in everyone becoming an autonomous subject, but on this point he is completely unconvincing.

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model, the Prussian army did for Bismarck). In this spirit it was not untypical of Carlyle to express himself as follows: "Mankind sail their life-voyage in huge fleets, following some single whale-fishing... Commodore: the log-book of each differs not, in essential purport, from that of any other: nay the most have no legible log-book (reflection, observation not being among their talents); keep no reckoning, only *keep in sight* of the flagship,—and fish..."[12] With this kind of attitude it would be wholly unreasonable to expect a meaningful theory of action from Carlyle. Once again Marx provides an illuminating contrast in the sense that his interest was in autonomous, self-determining activity through which he hoped men and women would become the subjects of their own history. What he wanted to see was a "suffering mankind *that thinks,*" and he meant by this that people have to take the weapons of criticism into their own hands in order to free themselves from all that oppresses them.[13] This *is* what a theory of practice is all about, but nothing could be further removed from Carlyle's own approach to the subject.

What, then can be said about Carlyle's contribution to a theory of radical activism? Rosenberg argues that there is something here, in the corpus of Carlyle's work between 1828-1843, that is instructive for the 1970s. He says that "so far as England was concerned...[Carlyle] created the intellectual tools that would make possible a radical critique of modern industrial society" (33). If this is so, one can only be struck by the paucity of English thought at the time. Except for a handful of ideas and a few novel ways of looking at things, Carlyle has very little to contribute to the present. His ideas, while often interesting, have failed to transcend the age for which they were written.

David Gross

12. Thomas Carlyle, "Boswell's Life of Johnson," *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, III (New York, 1969), p. 86.

13. Karl Marx, *The Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, ed. Loyd Easton and Kurt Guddat (New York, 1967), pp. 210, 157. My italics.

Jean-Paul Sartre, Philippe Gavi, Pierre Victor, *On a raison de se révolter*. Paris: Gallimard, 1974.

Since 1968, France has been going through a period of intense political and labor struggles that have brought about a shift to the Left to an extent that almost half the population voted for the Socialist Presidential candidate in the last election. This period of social-political change has been accompanied by a proliferation of political groups, theories, and ideological debate. Although the Left in France has progressed to the point when the Socialist Party and Communist Party are the largest political parties in France, most of the serious theorizing has taken place on the extreme Left, outside the ideological machinery of the traditional Old Left parties. Fighting at once the French establishment and the establishment Communists and Socialists, the non-establishment Left is producing an increasingly penetrating critique of advanced capitalism and traditional Marxism-Leninism.

In *On a raison de se révolter*, Jean-Paul Sartre and two young New Left collaborators attempt to develop new concepts of socialism and revolution, and to carry out a critique of Leninist theory and practice. Particularly interesting is the new revolutionary strategy and theory which they have developed, in part through

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participating in and reflecting on the struggles in France since May 1968. This book consists of a series of tape-recorded conversations between Sartre, Pierre Victor (a 28-year-old leader of the French Maoist movement), and Phillippe Gavi (a 33-year-old journalist for *Libération*, the paper Sartre had been directing).[1] The discussions cover the period between November 1972 and March 1974. The participants try to describe their ideas on socialism and revolution and to come to terms with the concrete problems facing a revolutionary in modern France. Obsolete and unsound ideas are discarded in the course of the conversation and are replaced by the convergence in the positions of the three participants toward new socialist-revolutionary perspectives. The result is a fascinating and challenging book that gives an excellent picture of the position of the New Left in France. It is also interesting to see how Sartre and his friends come to terms with the events that intervene in their discussion: the fascist *coup d'état* in Chile, the Middle East War, and the increasing militant strikes and factory occupations in France, culminating in the LIP actions where French workers threw out the bosses and ran the factory themselves. In this new work Sartre seems to have resolved some of the problems in his earlier philosophy and has advanced to a qualitatively different philosophical position from both his early existentialist works and his transitional Marxist works.

The first three discussions deal with Sartre's adventures with the French Communist Party and provide a critique of Leninism along with an absorbing account of the tortuous political route Sartre has followed in the last thirty years. During the French resistance and in the first decade or so of the post-war period, Sartre saw the Communist Party as the "organic representative of the working class" (28) that formulated its thought and fought for its interests. Choosing the fight for the working class against the bourgeoisie impelled Sartre to become a "Communist Party fellow traveller." As the Cold War intensified during the Korean War, Sartre saw the necessity of choosing between the two main power blocks, the US and the USSR. Sartre chose the USSR—a choice that led to his break with his old cohorts Camus and Merleau-Ponty. He described his participation in the Communist Party defense of Henri Martin, a sailor jailed for opposing the French-Indochina War, as "the act of rupture of a bourgeois with his class" (31). After a particularly brutal example of repression during a Communist demonstration, Sartre declared that "an anti-Communist is a dog" and in a series of articles, "The Communists and Peace," Sartre defended the Communist Party and the USSR. All this was considered "ultra-bolshevism" by Merleau-Ponty.

Sartre was always uneasy with the Communist Party, who distrusted his existentialist philosophy which it, perhaps rightly, feared would lead the youth away from the Party. Hence, Sartre was never treated as a comrade, was insulted and slandered in Party publications, even when he was working with the Party. The uneasy alliance between Sartre and the Communists was shaken by the Hungarian revolution in 1956 (after which Sartre wrote "The Ghost of Stalin") and was definitively broken by the non-revolutionary positions taken by the French CP in May 1968 and during the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia shortly thereafter: "This imperialist dictatorship had nothing in common with normal relations of socialist countries between themselves" (38).

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1. In the summer of 1974, illness forced Sartre to give up his position of director of *Libération*.

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After May 1968, the presence of a revolutionary movement outside of and to the left of the Communist Party made it possible for Sartre to be politically active without submitting to the dictates of the Party. The alliance with the New Left made it possible for Sartre to engage in a Marxist critique of the CP, rooted in an alternative revolutionary tendency. What Sartre particularly objected to was the authoritarian, bureaucratic structure and rigidity of the Old Left Parties. The "heavy machinery" of the Party cranks out its dictates and policies from above and passes down its orders to the members below, in the same authoritarian manner as the capitalist corporations and factories. This lack of democracy, of a free exchange of ideas, of communication and discussion, creates a bureaucratic machine and closed ideology. The censored, dogmatic atmosphere in which Party policy is formulated and promulgated leads, in Sartre's view, to a "sickness of thought:" a set of slogans, rhetoric, slander, and sometimes lies that imitate the ideological productions of the capitalist media, political parties, and State apparatus. Sartre comments: "An apparatus has the thought of its structures and thus the structures of the Party—ossified, bureaucratic, strongly hierarchized—thus produce hierarchical and bureaucratic thought that is completely opposed to the people's thought" (37). Moreover, the Party has institutionalized revolution, reducing it to sacred formulas ("the Party line") and to rituals and ceremonies (meetings, demonstrations, etc.). In May 1968, however, it was clear that "this revolutionary Party had clearly decided not to make the revolution" (38). The revolution was postponed by the Party to a distant future, for which the members are told to patiently wait, and in the meantime to pay their Party dues and to vote for the Party candidates.

After recounting the circumstances and reasons for Sartre's break with the Old Left and alliance with the New Left, the rest of the conversation is concerned with elaborating new concepts of revolution and socialism to serve as a re-vitalized Marxist alternative to the Old Left. A recurring theme is the critique of institutions and the insistence that a revolutionary Party should "resemble as little as possible an institution; moreover it contests all institutionalism outside of itself and above all in itself" (48). Although Sartre emphasizes throughout the discussions the themes of liberation and revolt and takes strongly anti-authoritarian positions, he and his two companions are concerned to develop a revolutionary organization that nourishes the spirit of revolt, preserves individual liberty, encourages democratic discussion and avoids all the traps that lie in institutional order (hierarchy, power-tripping, bureaucratic rigidity, etc.). They all agree that revolution is not a replacement of one apparatus by another and that the revolutionary organization should be a communal, comradely, democratic association that will serve as a model of the new society that is the goal of revolutionary activity. Their theoretical work is "to unmask the institutions that cover over what is unsupportable: the political cults, family, marriage, the rites and apparatus" (53). This critique of all institutions is being carried out by Sartre and his friends in *Libération*, the first New Left daily newspaper. They see the task of the revolutionary intellectual as engaging in "permanent ideological insurrection" against the dominant ideology and institutions, to induce wide-spread revolts against the ruling ideas and institutions. This ideological revolution is geared to make the people reject and revolt against their oppressors and the institutions that daily alienate and stultify us.

This subversive action should take place in the institutions and against them. This form of action involves both using the parliamentary rules and system of justice and

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less legal means to destroy the institutions, values, and structures that are the obstacle to liberation and a free society (cf. the chapter on illegality, pp. 83-93).[2] The most striking example of subversive action that actualizes the ideas of direct democracy and workers' control is the workers' takeover in the LIP watch company in southern France. This event is continuously discussed in *On a raison de se révolter* and shows that the revolutionary strategy and goals envisioned by the French New Left are both desirable and workable. Let us then briefly review the LIP occupation.

After a decline in sales in 1969 (which the workers attributed to ineffective management), the LIP factory came under the control of a Swiss multinational corporation, Ebauches, Inc., which also controls the Longine watch company. Around 1970, management began laying off workers and attempted to cut back on benefits granted after the May 1968 revolts. The workers responded with strikes, work slowdowns, and organized an Action Committee to coordinate workers' activities and to popularize their demands. The struggle peaked on June 12, 1973, when the Board of Directors met to decide what to do about workers' unrest and to settle the future of the company. The workers got hold of a document showing that the Directors planned to continue to lay off and eventually to dismantle the whole factory. Angered by such treacherous plans, the workers stormed the meeting, demanding to discuss the issues and to question the management. The Board refused, so the workers occupied the factory and locked in the bosses. The police quickly came in to liberate the Board, but left the workers in control of the factory. To ensure receiving their June wages, the workers seized a stock of watches in the factory. Suddenly realizing that the factory was in their hands, they decided to reorganize production and to produce and sell the watches themselves. During the succeeding months, they developed a remarkably democratic way of organizing their labor activity and instituting workers' control (*autogestion*).

The LIP workers formed an Action Committee which met every morning at 8:00 to discuss the problems of the day and then met later with union representatives and all the people to debate proposals and problems. In this way free discussion of all pertinent issues was inaugurated and all decisions were made by democratic voting procedures. Furthermore, work was completely reorganized by the workers themselves, eliminating managers and setting their own wage-rates. They also established a day care center, a cafeteria, social and educational events, a weekly newspaper, a radio show, and committees to popularize and explain the actions throughout Europe. Thousands of visitors flocked to observe the LIP events, and its enthusiastic reception (and a delicate political situation) prevented the French Government from intervening until the vacation period in August. After troops reoccupied the factory, the LIP workers set up production in a local school and vowed not to compromise their demands in negotiations with the management which, to my knowledge, are still going on.

The direct democracy posited by Sartre and his friends as the primary requirement for a revolutionary organization and a basic goal of revolutionary struggle is illustrated by the LIP events. In order to make possible real democracy, there must be "organs of decentralized power, in the labor domain and in all social domains... our objective is the establishment of this direct democracy from which a whole ensemble of problems, unsolvable in the actual authoritarian society, could be finally

2. Recall that in an interview "On Maoism" published in *Telos* 16, Sartre stated, "Thus is one reason I am drawn to the Maoists: I believe in illegality" (p. 101).

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posed in terms of mass action" (108). In the revolutionary strategy projected, different groups of people who experience different forms of oppression (say workers, minorities, students, women, etc.) would form their own groups and engage in their own revolts. All these different groups would have their own objectives, praxis, and autonomy. However, to be an efficient political force, the revolutionary groups must be *fused* into a revolutionary movement. This requires a revolutionary *crucible* in which the various struggles produce shared, common goals, values, ideas, targets and strategies. The fusion takes place on two levels: individuals sharing the same problems, perspective, and political goals fuse into a group bound together by solidarity, friendship, and common struggles; and then the groups are to be fused into a revolutionary movement. The framework for the first fusion is decentralized democratic groups, while the second fusion demands a *rassemblement* or political assemblage in which separate groups come together for united action or discussion of collective goals. This crucible embodies Mao's notion that the revolutionaries must "invent ways of fusing together, to assemble what is objectively separated" (130). Consider the Chinese popular army that fused workers, peasants, intellectuals, nationalists and petty-bourgeoisie together into a revolutionary force. Examples of such fusion of distinct groups for revolutionary actions would be the French May 1968 struggle, the many anti-imperialist actions that united progressive forces all over the world, and the many assemblies and demonstrations around specific issues. In America, the anti-War movement is perhaps the most vivid illustration of what is intended by a crucible or fusion of distinct groups toward a common objective.

This theory, however, rejects the Leninist notion that the revolutionary party is the sole agent of the revolution. Sartre and his friends constantly stress the need to radicalize middle class women, minorities, any group whose interests oppose the system (which is to say, almost everybody). Whereas most of the New Left in France agrees that the workers are the "principal force" in a revolutionary crucible, they attempt to avoid the fetishism of the working class assumed by the Old Left and attempt to expand the base for revolution.

As the conversation develops, certain problems with the notion of the revolutionary crucible are raised. From the beginning Sartre is skeptical of the crucible notion which he finds "too Hegelian" (114), i.e., too prone to dissolve differences in a synthesis that reconciles opposites. The differences between various groups and social strata cannot be so simply fused into a majority force. Certain revolutionary ideas like the abolition of private property, or the family, or the wage-labor system, will run aagainst wide-spread prejudices, and other ideas like homosexuality, women's liberation, abortion, etc., will be divisive. Victor, the chief advocate of the crucible notion (held by French Maoists), argues that the confrontation of ideas and attack on popular prejudices will overcome divergences and will expand the radicalization process. But certain prejudices, according to Sartre, won't yield to persuasion. Moreover, to preserve the autonomy of the groups-in-struggle and to avoid falling into the traps of authoritarian Marxism, an anti-authoritarian attitude is to be fostered that questions all institutionalized organization. Since this will create deep distrust of a strong, centralized organization, it is doubly difficult to see how the disparate groups with their own struggles are to be fused into a revolutionary assembly where an anti-authoritarian and anti-organization mentality prevails, except in the circumstances of especially obnoxious acts of repression or crime that could rally a divided left together.

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In fact, in a discussion on organization and spontaneity with an Italian Marxist of the *Il Manifesto* tendency in 1969,[3] Sartre argued that a revolutionary fusion only developed in a concrete revolutionary struggle and that when the groups-in-fusion were merged into a party, "with minor exceptions, as soon as the party becomes an institution it invariably becomes reactionary in relation to what it seeks to create or develop, i.e., *the fusion of the group*."[4] Whereas the Party plays a positive role in revolutionary struggle by preventing the lapse into complete serialization (i.e., automization), it then absorbs and dominates the revolutionary groups-in-fusion and defuses their revolutionary potential by imposing an institutionalized order. In a revealing passage presaging *On a raison to se révolter*, he stated: "the party grows as a conglomerate of institutions, and therefore as a closed system with sclerotic tendencies. Therefore, it is always out of step with the fusing masses, even when it tries to lead them. This comes about because the party at best impoverishes the masses in its attempts to subordinate them, while at worst, it rejects and negates them. This is why the thinking of a fusing group which originated under the heat of a specific situation, and which is not 'spontaneous' has a stronger function, a much more critical and original function than that of a structured group... Still another classical example is the question of democratic centralization. As long as the party is in a transitional context, e.g., during the clandestine buildup of the struggle in Russia, when Lenin was formulating a theoretical basis for it, it remained a viable force. At one time there were both a centralizing and a democratic moment since the people discussed things and decisions were made jointly. Just as soon as the party became institutionalized, however, as is the case with all Communist Parties, centralization took precedence over democracy. Consequently, even its democracy has become 'institutionalized' and subject to its own kind of inertia."[5]

At that time (1969), Sartre could find no way to resolve the contradiction between the spontaneity of revolutionary struggle and the institutionalized sclerosis of the party. And the contradiction remains unresolved in *On a raison de se révolter*.

Since in the Marxian conception theory is grounded in practice, the new revolutionary theory is preceded by a discussion on French political practice from May 1968 to the present day, with special emphasis on the struggles of the New Left and the most radical workers' struggles. Supporting and participating in the various worker, student, and youth struggles led to a questioning of the Leninist model of the seizure of state power as *the* goal of the revolution. They agreed that the transition to socialism involved the development of a counter-society with its own culture, values, ideology, and way of living. Before state power is taken, the new society should offer living alternatives to the current institutions, values, life-styles, etc. This line of thought leads to a notion of *double power*: the power of the State and "subversive marginal power." The new revolutionary strategy seeks to seize and expand marginal power to provide space for developing new institutions, ways of relating and values as a prelude to the construction of a liberated society. This involves the rejection of the Leninist model of winning *the* (state) power in an armed struggle or insurrection that seeks to destroy the old order and create the new order in the Great Day (or 10 days) of revolutionary apocalypse. The experience of taking

3. This interview was published in *Telos* 4 (Fall 1969).
4. *Telos* 4, p. 193.
5. *Telos* 4, pp. 194-195.

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partial power, of expanding one's own power and struggling against the powers of oppression and exploitation provides living revolutionary experience and reveals the nature of the repressive state-social power—and shows what must be done to overcome one's powerlessness.

Marginal power is democratic power, power to the people, power to control, change, and reorganize one's life. The challenge to the Left is to increase marginal power until it creates the conditions to become "majority power" that would make possible a transition to socialism in which power would be truly exercised by the majority. This switch from despotic minority power to democratic majority power will create a new type of power and a new attitude toward power that is opposed to the present mode of power as a mode of domination and often oppression. For this transition to succeed, the new society must create a consciousness that revolts against oppressive uses of power and that does not use power as an instrument of domination. For this to work there must be checks and controls against all forms of power to avoid the creation of new institutions and situations of oppression. Majority power, democratic power, power kept in check, is thus taken to be the alternative and antidote to repressive minority power and a radical difference from the present society. "The revolution will be made when the majority will find themselves so conscious of its situation, in the face of the minority that oppresses them that they will understand their power" (Sartre, 310).

But who will make this revolution? What sort of person is the new revolutionary who will engage in the revolutionary practice so far described? The revolution depends in part, Sartre and his friends believe, in the development of a new kind of revolutionary intellectual, akin to Gramsci's organic intellectual. It is agreed that May 1968 put in question the concept of the classical intellectual, whose thought was separated from practice and often from reality. The new intellectual will combine theory and practice and will extend and expand his functions qua intellectual. For the classical intellectual, to write and perhaps lecture is his essential, privileged function. The new intellectual, however, will engage as well in discussion, communication, and militant action. Describing the process through which he became this new type of intellectual, Victor writes: "one vomits up the culture of books, one wants to have access to reality" (97). The new intellectuals gain their picture of the world from practice. Discussing and acting thus replaces reading and writing as the privileged function of the intellectual. In this sense, the conversations in *On a raison de se révolter* provide a model for the new kind of intellectual inquiry, communication, and practice that breaks with the classical model of one person writing a book by oneself. All of the participants contribute and in the course of the discussion, the give and take of debate changes all their positions (a point stressed in the introduction) toward a common perspective. Sartre notes that in the political practice and daily life of his New Left comrades, "I believe that I grasp in you, and not only in you but in the anti-hierarchy and liberation movement, an announcement of a new politics, and the roots of the new men who will make it" (77).

The new intellectual is pre-eminently a *political person*. The new type of revolutionary is a synthesis of what the current society separates into "politician" and "intellectual." The new revolutionary renounces the means and techniques of domination and manipulation used by today's politicians for *persuasion*. He or she replaces their cynicism and opportunism with *sincerity*. They speak to the issues, tell the truth, take a position, discuss and persuade. The synthesis of intellectual and

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politician prefigures the future socialist society in which everyone is a politician and intellectual, in which fragmentation and specialization is overcome.

In chapters xix and xx, the participants again ask what being a revolutionary today in 1974 entails. They agree that he or she must "learn the apprenticeship of democracy in the milieu of revolt" (320). Sometimes the revolutionary revolts against an intolerable situation. Sometimes he or she acts on moral or ideological grounds. For the revolution to grow and develop, the revolutionary must connect each revolt to the social totality and to each other, explaining the connection of each revolt to the power structure and the need for collective action and group fusing to change the power structure as a whole. Marginal actions must be related to each other and to the majority while ways are discovered to expand without compromising and being co-opted and absorbed by the system. The revolutionary must shed all class prejudices (*se déclasser*), by engaging in self-criticism—a necessary condition of revolutionary consciousness—by overcoming one's own contradictions. The new type of revolutionary intellectual begins the revolution *now*: "What we have attempted to prove, I believe in these conversations, is that the revolutionary person constitutes himself at the time in which he finds himself: he represents a person who will not make the revolution, or who will begin it but not make it, but he prepares it, reflects on it, organizes it; he organizes in the function of his alienation. He is the person who becomes aware of his alienation right to the end, and in the face of it, lives at a distance the possible existence of a society where the people will not be alienated, and he is the one who struggles so that this society will exist... Many oppressed people are at this time preoccupied in creating revolutionary actions, actions that diminish their oppression: refusing to obey bosses, the minor bosses, and they call that a socialist program. The idea of revolution has been born and is found everywhere. They do not call it revolution, because it makes them afraid, but they are found everywhere and the people who will read our conversations all, I believe, have the idea of revolution, but they simply do not call it that" (Sartre, p. 340).

The concept of the new revolutionary intellectual was discussed in a conversation between Marcuse and the authors of *On a raison de se révolter* that was tape recorded and reproduced, in part, in the June 7, 1974 edition of *Libération*. The part concerning the new type of revolutionary intellectuals follows:

Sartre: The intellectual overtakes little by little another aspect of his existence (that is to say, the revolutionary intellectual) to the precise extent that the society progresses. The two go together: at the present time, for example, there is a certain relative progression, debatable, which consists of young workers, of young students toward that new left of which we are speaking. The intellectuals are not the first ones who are there. They follow, they accompany.
Marcuse: They follow whom?
Sartre: They follow the young workers, the students who themselves envisage the New Left...
Marcuse: The intellectual can always formulate or elaborate or concretize the goal of the progressive movement and the demands of the workers.
Sartre: Yes! He can do it! But the workers can do it also! And they can do it better for themselves than the intellectuals.
Marcuse: By themselves?
Sartre: And for themselves! They can better express what they feel, what they think

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for themselves than if that was done by an intellectual. The intellectual, not always, but most of the time, is not the best one to formulate. He is the best one to discuss.
Marcuse: But not to formulate?
Sartre: Not always. The intellectual and the worker were very close for a hundred, a hundred and fifty years. That has changed by virtue of the evolution of the working class and now they are drawing nearer precisely because the intellectual *can polish the worker's thought, but just polish it, not produce it.*
Marcuse: I am not yet convinced... The problems which pose themselves in a revolutionary society, the problem of love, the problem of passion, the problem of all the erotic conflicts, the problem of the demand for the eternity of joy, all that is formulated by the intellectuals of the old type. Do you want to suppress all that?
Sartre: I want to change all that. Personally I feel myself still an old type intellectual.
Marcuse: I also, I do not contest that.
Sartre: But me, I contest myself!
Marcuse: No, I do not have a bad conscience. Excuse me, but I am sincere.
Sartre: And I do not have a bad conscience. For me, the classical intellectual is an intellectual who ought to disappear.

Contrary to the opinion of some Sartrean critics, *On a raison de se révolter* marks both a radical political and philosophical transformation in Sartre's ongoing and developing project. It is simply not true that Sartre is "always the same old Sartre" as Aronson and other have argued.[6] For Aronson, remnants of the old existentialist Sartre dominate the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. He concludes, "Sartre integrates Marxism into *his* philosophy, rather than transforming his own key terms."[7] In fact, while Sartre's critics were chastising the contradictions between his philosophy and politics (Aronson: "The older Sartre winds up with unpolitical works of the mind and a mindless activism"),[8] or the contradictions between his existentialism and Marxism, Sartre himself was devoting his intellectual energy to overcoming these problems. Indeed, his latest work reveals a changed political and theoretical position in the context of his political activism, so that there is now a coalescence of his theoretical position with his political practice.

One can distinguish three distinct stages in the Sartrean corpus: (1) the early existentialist phase that endured through the early 1950s, say from *Nausea* to *Saint Genet*; (2) Sartre's transitional works that contained Marxist political analysis with an uneasy co-habitation of existentialist and Marxist notions that reached its peak in *The Critique of Dialectical Reason*; and (3) a move toward a resolutely Marxist political and philosophical perspective, beginning in the late 1960s, in which many of his former existentialist notions were discarded. In retrospect, a careful re-reading of Sartre's works would show that the present changes are hinted at in his earlier transitional works. Sartre's itinerary should be viewed above all as a life-long series of self-development elicited by a unique immersion in the history and social struggles

6. Aronson, "The Root of Sartre's Thought," *Telos* 13 (Fall 1972); "Sartre's Individualist Society Theory," *Telos* 16 (Summer 1973); and "The Ultimate Sartre," *Telos* 20 (Summer 1974). See also Wilfrid Desan, *The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre* (New York, 1965); George Lichtheim, *The Concept of Ideology and Other Essays* (New York, 1967); James Sheridan, *Sartre: The Radical Conversion* (Athens, Ohio, 1969).
7. Aronson, "Sartre's Individualist Social Theory," *op.cit.*, p. 69.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

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of his time.

Sartre confesses that just as his involvement with the French CP divested him of his "writer neurosis" (that salvation was found in art), the New Left went further and put his status as an intellectual in question (96). Everyone's existence, and above all, the intellectual's, was challenged by May 1968. The French New Left gave Sartre and others a powerful political force to the left of the Communist Party, with whom they could work. But, as Sartre notes, "they wouldn't accept us [intellectuals] as we were." This was made clear one night in 1969 as Sartre approached the lectern in a student assembly to speak and found a note, "Sartre, be brief." He saw that the students demanded practical thought, decisions, participation, and not merely a general analysis or clever rhetoric. Shortly thereafter, Sartre became politically involved with the New Left: he became publisher of *La cause du peuple* and *J'accuse*, which he sold on the streets; he talked to students and factory workers; worked with various leftist groups, demonstrated, marched, signed petitions and manifestos, made speeches, defended violence and illegality as revolutionary tactics --and was rewarded for his efforts by the French establishment with five different criminal charges (none of which was ever prosecuted).[9] In 1972, he became publisher of *Libération*, and has engaged in continual conversations with the newspaper group and leftist political groups.

How has the French New Left influenced Sartre's ideas? Which of his ideas have been confirmed and strengthened by his recent political involvement? Consider his ideas on liberty and morality, for instance. In the Introduction to his latest work, he speaks about freedom in the following way:

Sartre: I have re-learned, if you wish...
Victor: A reminiscence, or what?
Sartre: Yes, reminiscence of a theory which is completely mine, the theory of freedom. I think that each man is free. I explain in the conversations what I mean by this. Up to 1968, this freedom did not appear very clearly in the political domain, and I ought to say it, my relations with the CP led me rather to take a dislike to it. The CP and freedom: they don't go together.
Victor: From there, *Dirty Hands.*
Sartre: From there, *Dirty Hands*; and now I see, I re-see, the possibility of conceiving a political struggle based on freedom. It is something very important for me to rediscover today, what I had thought twenty-five years ago, to rediscover it through different paths, quite bizarre, quite winding, finally rediscovering it and it is that which I will tell you. I have spoken of freedom in the course of these discussions, but we are counting on making a conclusion to these conversations and I will talk in this conclusion of the role of freedom in the actual practice of the organizations that we are having to create. Therefore, for me I have simply found the realistic truth while confronting reality with you... I would say to you that for me the dialogue from the beginning to the end has been the disengagement more and more precise, more and more progressive, of the idea of freedom; it does not always appear in the discussions, but it presided completely over what I have said, in the foundation by its rebirth and its precision [16-17].

9. A list of Sartre's political activities from 1968 through the summer of 1971 is found in an article by Michel Contat and Michel Rybalka in a special Sartre issue of *Magazine litteraire*, 55-56.

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Sartre's freedom now is no longer concerned with total freedom and the freedom of the individual—a concern, as we shall see later, that was the source of profound contradictions in his earlier philosophy. The task of philosophy, Sartre argues (pp. 99-104), is to "define morality from the standpoint of freedom" and to define the role of freedom in political struggle and revolt. "The philosophy that would express in words what this freedom is would permit men to become conscious more profoundly of their situation" (101) in order to liberate themselves and transform their situation. Liberation and political struggle is a senseless impossibility from a determinist standpoint. While Sartre admits that each individual is profoundly *conditioned* by his social environment, this conditioning involves an oppression and alienation of human freedom, a factor which dialectically allows for revolt. Says Sartre: "there is no revolt without freedom that is oppressed, exploited, or alienated" (101).

Sartre has come a long way from *Being and Nothingness*, rooting freedom in the phenomena of revolt and political struggle. In *Being and Nothingness,* Sartre maintained a belief in absolute and unadulterated freedom. But this notion of total freedom was not only an idealistic mystification of the human condition and a grotesque exaggeration of the powers of the human subject, but was obscene in the face of the concentration camps and fascist torture.[10]

What was totally lacking in the early Sartrean notion was a dialectical concept of the reciprocal interaction between the individual and his environment. Although Sartre had a notion of freedom-in-situation, he hadn't really developed the notion of situation and wasn't aware of how the constituents of the situation—the family, schools, state, ideology, the economy—were real obstacles, real oppressive factors that from the beginning of consciousness rendered the notion of total freedom a hopeless myth. Sartre recalls how the "force of circumstances," the weight of history and repressiveness of society, finally led him to abandon this myth of absolute freedom. The belief that the human being is totally free is, says Sartre, a generalization from the position of the bourgeois artist or intellectual, who generalizes his relative freedom, his isolation and privacy, his privileged class position, into an ontological notion that is supposed to hold for all men—an obvious fallacy.

No doubt Sartre's study of Marx and Freud helped him modify his former notion. In *Being and Nothingness*, he denied the existence of the unconscious and, playing with Freud's notion of the censor who pushes unpleasant ideas and memories into the unconscious, argued that everything, even in Freud's conception, was conscious. To deny this was an evasion, bad faith. Sartre slowly came to see the force of Freud's theory and in *The Words* showed how his own childhood experiences and social environment conditioned his later behavior (he is now doing the same thing for Flaubert).

Moreover, Sartre has put his concept of freedom in a political context and has dropped his obsession with the freedom of the individual and his exaggerated existentialist individualism. In fact, he now says, "It is not the individual which interests me" (174). The individual in capitalist society is a mutilated product of the capitalist labor system—one who is atomized by the institutions, the rhythm of work, etc. The individual alone is not the bearer of truth, but "only the thought of a group is the truth" (169-170).

10. Cf. Marcuse's critique of Sartre's notion of total freedom in his 1948 article on "Sartre's Existentialism," reprinted in *Studies in Critical Philosophy.*

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This preference for the group over the individual marks a real development in Sartre's thought. He argues that freedom makes sense and is of real importance only if it is freedom for everyone: "if freedom is reserved for some, precisely intellectuals, that is to say that it isn't worth anything; it can only have meaning if it is the object of everyone. Therefore, if you wish, this was my idea dating from 1945 which is no longer individualistic, but that is extended to everyone" (258).

Sartre's extension of the concept of freedom from the individual to the social group is also found in his discussions of morality. Previously, he had spoken of individual values and morality. Now he speaks of groups in revolt creating common values and creating or discovering universal values.

Sartre's earlier works were marked by unsolvable contradictions between the doctrine of total freedom and his insistence on the alienating-repressive power of the Other. (Hence the Sartrean man of the *Being and Nothingness* period was totally free and yet the Other was an ineluctable limit to freedom.) They expressed a tension between his stress on freedom-individuality-responsibility and a desire to develop an ethical theory. Indeed, given the individualistic bias, it was impossible to develop anything more than an individualistic morality, which is no morality at all (as Sartre now recognizes in his equation of morality with universality). And most troubling was the contradiction between Sartre's political tendencies toward radical change (which presupposes group praxis) and his doctrine that "hell is other people," that there can be no authentic human relations, no human solidarity, nothing but unending conflict (being-for-others is defined in *Being and Nothingness* as conflict without any hope of escape, no exit).

Throughout the 1950s, Sartre worked to resolve these tensions and contradictions without much success. Simone de Beauvoir tells how Sartre filled notebook after notebook with a draft of his work on morality, *L'homme*, which he then abandoned, supposedly on the grounds that it made no sense to speak of morality in a class society where people were oppressed, tortured, and dying of hunger. After the revolution we could perhaps speak of developing a universal morality, not before. Unable to solve the antinomy of freedom and morality, Sartre set to work on a theory of the dialectic between the individual and society in *The Critique of Dialectical Reason*. To make sense of his radical politics, he had to show how individuals fuse into a group and overcome their ontological solitude and hostility to each other. Although this work is not really understood in either its intentions or performance, there is some truth in the contention that Sartre is, by and large, the same old Sartre of the existentialist period. But there are differences: the development of the dialectical method, the historical materialist framework, the concepts of the series, group, and group-in-fusion, the limitations and conditioning of human freedom, the attempt to develop a Marxist notion of praxis preserving the moments of freedom and subjectivity, and so on. An adequate appreciation of *The Critique of Dialectical Reason* has yet to be written.

Yet only in *On a raison de se révolter* has Sartre fully liberated himself from earlier bourgeois notions to contribute to the development of a revitalized living Marxism. Francis Jeanson corroborates the above claim in his new book: "From 1941 Sartre has not ceased to grasp hold of the givens of the circumstantial order (the events of his personal history or the collective history, or the attitude of others to his person) in order to interrogate himself, to contest himself, to think and *to engage*

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himself against himself. And, as I was able to directly experience in the milieu of that period 1941-1953, the form of *wrenching himself away from himself* [*arrachement à soi*] constitutes his most fundamental mode of functioning." [11] Basing his analysis on Sartre's autobiography, *The Words*, Jeanson documents Sartre's obsession to become a writer, his progression toward liberating himself from his idealism, his obsession to find salvation through writing, his isolation and alienation from the masses and history, and his activity and consciousness qua classical bourgeois intellectual. Sartre's whole development is based on a constant putting himself in question, a tearing himself away from false ideas and bourgeois ideology, a constant process of self-critique, self-clarification, change—in a word: *liberation*.

Sartre's changes can be interpreted as a long and tortuous road toward a version of dialectical and critical neo-Marxism. He notes how he was sympathetic to the Popular Front in 1936 and was always hostile to capitalism and bourgeois society (this is evident as early as *Nausea*). Even at the end of his first essay, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, he speaks positively of socialist revolution and of the workers using their freedom for their liberation. When Sartre returned to Paris from a German prison camp he set out to found a group "Socialism and Liberty:" a phrase that well sums up even his present thought. He claims that "I had become a convinced socialist, but anti-hierarchical and libertarian—that is, for direct democracy" (26). The acrimonious debates with the Communists in the post-war period and the tumultuous relations with the Party followed. Around 1952, Sartre began re-reading Marx and began work on his philosophical treatise, *Critique de la raison dialectique*, where he declared Marxism to be the philosophy of the present, in which existentialism was but a parasitical moment. Although he had his ups and downs (and finally a break) with the French CP and the USSR, he continually engaged in leftist politics, risking his life in the struggle against the Algerian war. Along this route he encountered history and human solidarity and worked these experiences into his philosophical project. [12]

The fundamental concern of Sartre's whole life is the challenge: what can I do with my freedom? At first, Sartre believed that art, writing, was the most authentic use of freedom through its ability to create a harmonious, well-ordered world, without the contingency and nastiness of everyday life. At the end of *Nausea,* Sartre's alter-ego, Roquentin, listens to a melody on a juke-box in a café and wants to attain that same purity, solidity, harmony in his own disordered life: salvation through art. Sartre's novels *The Roads to Freedom* explore a series of ways, mostly inauthentic, of using or fleeing from one's freedom. *Being and Nothingness* is an extended philosophical inquiry into the question of freedom, and *Critique de la raison dialectique* is concerned to show the social restraints on individual freedom. *On a raison de se révolter* attempts to develop a theory of "freedom in the organization"

11. Francis Jeanson, *Sartre dans sa vie* (Paris, 1974).

12. I might note that Sartre claims that his recent contribution to Marxist thought is also present in his books on Flaubert, *L'idiot de la famille*: "I intended to give a technique to understand people from the standpoint of a Marxist critique and biography" (69). He has now finished three volumes and is at work on a fourth which will be a summing up and conclusion. "I consider this work as a socialist work in the sense that if I succeed that would permit an advance in the comprehension of men from a socialist point of view" (73-74).

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and to show how freedom is the foundation of revolutionary praxis and the *telos* of socialism. Sartre's engagement in the cause of human freedom is the greatest intellectual adventure of the century.

Douglas Kellner

Anthony Wilden, *System and Structure—Essays in Communication and Exchange*. London: Tavistock, 1972. 510 pages.

Concept and object conceptualized are related—but never by equation. For Freud, the "thing presentation" and "word presentation" coexist in the mind to mediate the relationship. The thing presentation alienated from the word presentation is trapped in the unconscious and so is once more removed. For Marx, appearance mediates between knowledge and reality. Appearance bound in ideology is, too, once more removed.

These mediating links display striking parallels in the work of Freud and Marx. The objects of investigation differ—intrapsychic dynamics vs. social productive relations—but only as aspects of the same reality. Unlike the wise men studying the elephant, Freud and Marx are not blind to the rest of the beast.

Contained within their total theories are rather solid scientific foundations. Freud shows that the self is not entirely transparent to consciousness. Marx points out how forces and relations of production give form to culture and politics. Then, there are some less solid extrapolations. Innate aggression cannot explain war and the proletarian revolution did not occur first in advanced industrial Europe. Separating the solid foundations from some less solid extrapolations has been the task of many readings and interpretations of both. Jacques Lacan "reads" Freud and Louis Althusser "reads" Marx attempting to claim as their own the theorist they know through the original work in spite of his intermittent falls into scientism, ideology and other fallacies they weed out in the reading.[1]

In his second book, *System and Structure—Essays in Communication and Exchange*, Anthony Wilden looks in some depth at the paradigm creators (Freud and Marx) and at the "readers," the paradigm refiners and expounders. In doing so, he reconceptualizes social and psychic reality. If the test of a theory is in the facts it explains best, Wilden's task in reformulating the reformulations is to explain better more facts about this psycho-social reality. He makes an impressive attempt to find and fill the loopholes in previous attempts so as to develop a theory complex and flexible enough to aid us in understanding and controlling the reality of which we are part.

Wilden's forte is exegesis. His first book, *The Language of the Self*, is a scholarly and comprehensible translation and commentary of a sample of Lacan's anything but laconic text.[2] Lacan calls for a return to Freud. He feels that the problem with psychoanalysis is not the theory of Freud but the reductionism and distortions of Freud's interpreters and followers. He would rather see the candidates in psychoanalysis get lost for a while in the labyrinths of Freud's collected works than that they

1. Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits I et II* (Editions de Seuil: Paris, 1966); and Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading Capital* (New Left Books: London, 1970).
2. Anthony Wilden, *The Language of the Self* (Johns Hopkins: Baltimore, 1968).

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see the light prematurely in the simplifications of text-book syntheses. Lacan returns to Freud in the light of more recent scientific discoveries such as structural linguistics. He claims that the unconscious is "structured like a language." The wealth of sources Wilden brings in to help the intimidated reader decipher Lacan becomes the object, along with Lacan's work itself, of Wilden's thorough critique in his second book. Guided by the thought of a new guru, Gregory Bateson,[3] Wilden finds the handle to criticize some very elusive theories (e.g., Lévi-Strauss, Piaget, Gödel).

Wilden is the social science technician applying the communications-cybernetic paradigm to tease out the contradictions of the structuralist model. He does not speak for a social scientific revolution. He exposes the need for one. Again implicitly, he predicts that while the false heroes (Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, Piaget) will fall in this revolution, the core thoughts of certain timeless creators (Freud, Marx and now, Bateson) will be incorporated and give substance to the new paradigm. This paradigm will describe information as well as energy, relationships as well as entities, open along with closed systems, symbolic as well as imaginary discourse, analog and digital parameters rather than one or the other and significantly, liberation and truth rather than alienation and ideology. Wilden wants to reformulate Marx in communication terminology.

Implicit in such a reformulation is the conviction that Marx is not outdated because he derived and then applied his theories in examining a social reality that has since seen drastic change. The industrial proletariat of today may differ in circumstance and consciousness from that of the nineteenth-century. Socialism may not have eradicated alienation. The ruling class may be flexible enough to co-opt and profit from seemingly revolutionary events. Still, Marx has provided the most useful basics in understanding and dealing with even such phenomena that appear on the surface to contradict his work. Similarly, Freud's work is not to be discarded because the Vienna citizen of the turn of the century cannot serve as an entirely generalizable model. Wilden wants us to bring Marx and Freud up to date by returning to their original words, perhaps translated into Bateson's terms. Then, the flexibility, self-reflection and depth of their discoveries can be retained and be applied to a different order.

Grammar is the meta-level that tells us not about the content of speech, but the rules for putting the content together. The next higher meta-level tells us the rules for making rules of grammar. Similarly, Bateson points out, the nip is substituted for the bite in the play of young animals in accord with a message communicated between the animals at a higher logical level stating that this is play and not fight. In a social context, Jensen cannot be adequately rebutted by claims that blacks are innately as intelligent as whites, but must be confronted by questions about the role of IQ tests themselves in our unequal society. Male chauvinism cannot be countered by saying the woman has a phallus too (i.e., "women are equal to men"). The debate must be elevated to the level of the question: "Is the phallus the measure of all things?" "All dissent must be of a higher logical type than that to which it is opposed."[4]

Why does so little of this kind of dissent occur in our thinking and social discourse? Wilden attempts to show that this is a function of both the ideology that pervades

3. Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (Ballantine: New York, 1972).
4. Anthony Wilden, *System and Structure* (Tavistock: London, 1972), p. xxvii.

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science and the Imaginary Order that pervades our psyches. In this rather fragmented attempt, he hints at important mediations between social ideology and individual consciousness (or unconsciousness). Prerequisite to seeing this bridge is an understanding of the banks between which it extends—Lacan's view of Freudian metapsychology and the systems theory of ideology.

For Lacan, the transformation that occurs in the infant at the hypothetical point where he or she first views his or her image on the *other side* of the mirror and his or her *I* takes on a *me*, is the key to developing ego boundaries, identification, self-reflection, empathy and other capacities required for the symbolic discourse that is uniquely man's. Whether this "mirror phase" is an actual event or merely a prototypical statement of the subject's realization of its object-ness is not important. The infant's grasp of reality now involves not only the previously dominant Imaginary Order (loosely the phantasy relations), but also the emerging Symbolic Order. Thus, "what is real for the subject is always a function of the interaction of the symbolic and imaginary planes—there is no independently given relationship between the subject and external reality."[5]

Reality is distorted in neurosis and psychosis. Neurosis can be understood as the return of the repressed (from the unconscious within to the conscious within) as symptom or as "incomplete symbolization." Psychosis is more the return from without of something that had been disavowed, rejected. Voices are "heard" when what is not allowed within returns from without. In psychosis, the symbolic becomes real or "what never came to the light of the Symbolic (Order) must logically appeal in the real (Order)—the domain outside symbolization."[6]

Let us move on to Ideology. "False consciousness" appears in the content of thought. It also appears in the form of thought—e.g., the fact that in any particular social situation, the question of who is best is a prime consideration at all. Throughout *System and Structure*, ideology as this form of thinking is elucidated in systems theory vernacular. This relates not only to "dissent of a higher logical type," but also to many aspects of scientific debate. A false valuation of symmetry as a scientific aim is paralleled in public consciousness by statements like "black racism is as bad as white racism." This abstraction precludes scientific evaluation of objective social conditions and serves to rationalize the "Neutral" inactive stance of many armchair humanists. Likewise, exclusively either-or thinking bars in advance the possibility of both-and.

All communication has both analog and digital components. Analog scales such as rulers and mercury columns measure length or temperature by analogy on physical continuums. The digital, on the other hand, relies on discrete elements and discontinuous scales such as in the abacus or digital computer. The on-off characteristic employed in such computers is a sharp contrast to the continuity of the analog thermometer. The functioning of the central nervous system illustrates both. The digital becomes apparent in the all or nothing firing across synopses where analog continuities better describe interactions with hormones.

Some communications accentuate either the analog or the digital aspects. Denotation, where words express discrete things, is digital in comparison to communications relying on relationships which are more analog. Language is

5. George Gross, "The Political Economy of the Unconscious," in *Cambridge Review* (November 17, 1972), p. 56.

6. Anthony Wilden, *The Language of the Self, op.cit.*, p. 281.

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characterized by denotation while animal calls and signals do not denote some *thing* but only something about a relationship like that between the animal and danger. Thus, human communication can be described more as digital while animal communication is analog. In fact, increasing organization of a system leads to accentuating the digital. Nature's blends are analog while culture's distinctions are digital. Energy is analog while information (bits) is digital. These distinctions are relative and become inhibiting when made into absolute categories. Yet, the concepts are useful when discussing an imbalance between analog and digital. When psychosomatic symptoms are employed instead of spoken language to express intrapsychic messages the analog has been substituted for the digital. The opposite tendency toward "overdigitalization" is demonstrated when a lack of creativity results from an overemphasis on categories and order.

Many Freudian and Marxist concepts can be restated in terms such as these. Primary process can be viewed as analog relative to digital secondary process. Use value is primarily analog while exchange value is more digital. Alienation can be viewed as overdigitalization along a slightly different continuum, in the sense that atomism, quantifiability, individualism and competition are relatively digital overvaluations of contemporary capitalism.

Just as psychosocial realities can be described in terms of analog and digital, so can the descriptions themselves. We use language, concepts and ideas to map reality. Where the language or concept is too digital to map closely a more analog reality, distortion occurs. "Digital (discontinuous) communications about analog (continuous) relations" introduce distortions that Wilden sets out to diminish. His first step is to develop a common language which will bring this source of distortion into light. He chooses the language of systems theory.

Many terms common to the writing of Marx and Freud have different meanings for each. Repression, unconscious and drive are but a few examples. Wilden's cyberneticization provides some potential for each theory to comprehend the terms of the other. Then, it becomes possible to move back and forth between the theories in diminishing flaws and developing flexibility to describe complexities of psychosocial reality. As we noted above, the experience of the individual trapped in the reification of society might be described in terms of the Imaginary Order. The "double bind" generally described as a schizophrenogenic "no win" predicament for the individual might then also be seen as a more subtle mediation delivering individuals into the grip of ideology. Then, liberation is not a matter of either the personal or the social alone. "Schizophrenia in this sense is a social condition... the double bind is one of the most powerful weapons used against the individual members of our society to prevent metacommunication about its Imaginary values ...only if we share in this epistemology of opposition and identity can we be trapped into the counter-adaptive antinomies of class, caste, race and sex."[7]

This attempt to draw from Marx and Freud must be critical and not just eclectic, rigorous and not merely pedantic. For instance, quite some depth is required in weeding out the ideological aspects of Freud's work while grasping the scientific seed for the cross-fertilization. Marx provided a model for such criticism. He did not label contemporary theories of political economy as bourgeois ideology by decree. He first studied thoroughly Say, Smith, Ricardo and others. He used their own ground

7. Anthony Wilden, *System and Structure, op.cit.*, p. 108.

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rules to display the internal contradictions and gaps in their theories. Then, he explained their errors in terms of the blinders provided by their class perspective. Only then would he propose alternative solutions to problems (incorporating the still viable remnants of current theories) from the perspective of a better scientific method capable of explaining more—even the fallacies of prior ones.

Wilden's strength lies in his concerted efforts to develop this type of critique. In criticizing the structuralists, he employs rigorous cybernetics to demonstrate not so rigorous flaws. He claims Lacan does not realize that his structures, the Symbolic, Imaginary and Real, are of different logical levels and cannot be compared in linear fashion. He demonstrates the static equilibrium of a closed system implicit in Piaget's elements and transformations. This is a "confusion of the message by premature punctuation of the text." Lévi-Strauss confuses energy with information when he views the entity woman rather than the sign, sister or brother, as the object of symbolic exchange.

Having pointed out the contradictions internal to these theories, he goes on to suggest their ideological roots. Lacan imposes ideas on analysands by claiming to be neutral while actually being something other. Piaget ignores the observer's influence on the observed. Lévi-Strauss is an idealist, etc. The viability of Wilden's alternative theory will be examined further on. His critiques to this point, though, are a welcome relief in contrast to some less than probing contemporary blanket dismissals of "bourgeois ideology." If intellectuals are to be attracted to Marxism, it will be because they are impressed by the sincerity of the search rather than the purity of the conclusions. In this respect, Wilden opens some doors.

One question has plagued Marxists for some time, though evidently not enough to develop an answer. If certain big money representatives do not actually get together to plot how to fool the public, how does ideology as false consciousness operate? Surely, the Marxist critique of certain scientists as ideologists need not imply that those scientists willfully attempt to delude the public and themselves. Classically, the answer to this question has been posed in terms of biases or incomplete perspectives of which the individual scientist may not even be aware, introduced and consolidated via the media, bourgeois institutions like the university, or even the family. Wilden is leading up to, but not quite articulating, another possible aspect of the mechanism of ideology—a psychosocial dynamic. He links reification (social process) with the Imaginary Order (psychological state). This may lead to an understanding of false consciousness as a crystalization of the multitude of personal imaginary distortions in the shape that preserves the ruling order. Bringing together the psychological and social realms in this way need not lead to a psychologism where social phenomena are reduced to psychological issues. Two French theorists are working on this issue.[8]

Wilden's first book is provocative and awesome—perhaps because it merely introduces Lacan's work. While the reader is struggling so hard to hold onto the fragments of understanding without ever grasping the point of the whole exercise, the promise is always there that once the point is grasped, it will be earth-shattering. It is always possible that penetration of the layers of esoteric insultation will expose a less-than-awesome core message.

Wilden's second book is more comprehensible, even more transparent. A problem

8. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalisme et Schizophrénie, Tome I: L'Anti-Oedipe* (Les Editions de Minuit: Paris, 1972).

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emerges in regard to his choice of systems theory as the instrument with which to build his sytem. Systems theory was developed mainly in relation to closed systems of machines. Noting that social relations involve open systems and that appropriate alterations in theory must be made, does not rule out the possibility that the theory itself is limited by its origins. Application of systems theory to higher levels of social organization might somewhere encounter a violation of the rules for making rules for making rules... Wilden is very concerned about punctuation or boundaries. Noise within the bounds of a delimited system may turn out to be meaning rather than noise when the larger ecosystem is considered. Thus, the discrepancy between effort expended and compensation received for work remained a mystery or noise at the level of the factory until Marx considered the whole social ecosystem and discovered its meaning as surplus value. But the discoveries of Marx depended on his developing an immensely flexible method and theory. Systems theory allows for the stipulation "this is an open system" but closure might still occur at the level of thinking or speaking in systems theory terms. Wilden relies too closely on a model he applies to higher logical levels than the one for which it was designed.

Marx never wrote a *Logic*. Lenin suggested we might find the equivalent submerged in the pages of *Capital*. The point is that the logic is inseparable from an examination of the material forces and relations of production. Wilden's meanderings through theoretical paths rarely touch on such practicalities. Where these forces and relations are considered, it is indirectly, through contact with the work of Marx. Thus, "under capitalism (symbolic) relationships between people are reduced to the status of (imaginary) relations between commodities or things."[9] Or, capitalism can be viewed in cybernetic thinking as a "runaway relationship: the more you have, the more you get."[10] Still, Wilden makes no more direct attempt to explore the economic base in his critique of the ideological superstructure. This gap results in understandable biases in the abstractions he develops. For instance, he tends to view social system change disproportionately as a result of technological development itself.[11]

Exceptions notwithstanding, Wilden has written a provocative germinal book about theory and about theories about theory. We read Marx and Freud not only to examine their treatment of issues of their day. We also read them to discover the generalizable truths that can be applied in our time. *System and Structure* explores enough concepts with enough depth to provide important insights and innovations for this search.

Terry A. Kupers

9. Anthony Wilden, *System and Structure, op.cit.*, p. 30.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 208.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

Phil Brown, *Toward a Marxist Psychology*. New York: Harper and Row, 1974. 186 plus xix pages. $2.95.

The need for opposition to establishment psychology and psychiatry and for the creation of liberating alternatives is exigent both because the expansion of Anglo-American psychology during the fifties and sixties has been matched by the increasing

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use of behavioral technology as an agent of repressive social control and because the experiences of the sixties furnished movement activists with an awareness of the necessary conjunction between personal and political change. These phenomena presage the growth of radical psychological theory and provide a context within which the publication of a volume such as *Toward a Marxist Psychology* is timely, even though this book does not contribute significantly to the intellectual and political development which it is intended to promote. For this volume fails to be programmatic at a theoretical level, being more successful as a rallying call to leftist action. Phil Brown's work reads like a transmogrified anthology, providing a lightweight appraisal of the ideas of writers such as Szasz, Reich, Fanon and Laing, whose work might be integrated into a comprehensive Marxist psychology. Brown does not specify adequately the direction in which such theoretical work should proceed and his attempts at critical evaluation and synthesis are vitiated by a style in which rhetoric frequently substitutes for ratiocination. But for all this, the book may be of service in the growing movement of resistance to the oppressive features of mainstream psychology and clinical practice. However, this influence will be double-edged since the gross effect of Brown's writings is to encourage visceral activism unsustained by clear-headed critical theory. I would like to mention just two of the areas in which this volume is, in my judgment, seriously misleading. These concern methodology and the issue of the Freudian-Marxist synthesis.

Brown is adamant that "there is no possibility of a Marx-Freud synthesis," although his treatment of this area is superficial and somewhat irrational. Brown's case against Freudianism rests on a reference to Salter's "refutation" which was written from a behaviorist standpoint, on a brief discussion of certain repressive functions of psychoanalytic theory and practice, and on an examination of Freud's male chauvinism and reactionary anthropology. The case is not debated with equanimity for Brown is dogmatic and vituperative. Freud is not credited with any discoveries of importance but is portrayed as a capitalist conspirator whose ideas are to be rejected wholesale. Brown's critique, if it can be called such, of the possibility of a Freud-Marx synthesis comprises an attack on Fromm, Marcuse and Reimut Reiche which in part concentrates on their use of Freud's theories about instinctual behavior. On this plane it is true that there can be no synthesis, but it is also true that Brown ignores the way in which psychoanalytic insights can inform Marxist psychology and the level on which the Freudian paradigm might be integrated into the Marxist framework. There is no discussion of the parallels between Freudian and Marxist models, of the contribution of the former to an understanding of intrapsychic conflict and alienation, or of the potential of the psychoanalytic method as an agent of personal and political demystification. Although Brown does offer an approbative chapter on Wilhelm Reich, no mention is made of Politzer, of Sève, of Habermas, or of Wilden's work on Lacan. Thus Brown distances himself from literature which, by trying in various ways to marry Marx and Freud, has in itself contributed to the foundations of radical psychology. I suggest that Marxist psychology will not be advanced by the incorporation of theories which are readily congenial but rather by a discriminating and thorough-going analysis of those formulations whose richness may be concealed by their conservative manifestations. In this respect, Brown's unreasoned dismissal of psychoanalysis as bourgeois ideology is not helpful.

Brown espouses a relativist epistemology implying that there is no basis by which, for example, one might adjudicate between pre- and post-Copernican or Galilean

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worldviews. Having crudely sketched a relationship between systems of knowledge and social structures, he counterposes scientisms and dialectics arguing that "it is necessary to see Marxism as a method, not a science." This position is confusing for while Brown's relativism is accentuated by the absence of any distinction between scientism and science, he asserts that "Marxism offers *the* method for *fully knowing* and acting to change the world" (emphasis altered), although he does not provide a clear exposition of this method. Indeed, it does not seem to occur to Brown that even for those of his readers who have attained familiarity with the epistemological and methodological tenets of the Marxist framework, there are still many questions to be raised about the way in which these should be applied to psychological phenomena. Even the domain proper to a dialectical science of psychology is not self-evident and the first step toward such a science should be a careful attempt to situate its object. Poised between sociology and biology, psychology demands concepts and categories adequate to describe the interaction of the social and the neurophysiological in the development of the individual personality. The utility of the traditional metaphors of "base" and "superstructure," which are the hallmark of Marxist cultural analysis, needs to be elaborated as well as the problems raised by psychological phenomena for those who accept a dichotomy between dialectical social reality and a non-dialectical nature. About these questions Brown is silent. He does refer to the three moments of Sartrean analysis but does not demonstrate the way in which this dialectical process provides a material and phenomenal account of both the unique and the social facets of human personality; nor does he discuss that relationship between empirics and hermeneutics which is fundamental to psychological knowledge. This latter question could well have been raised in his section on the antipsychiatrists and their work with so-called schizophrenics. In sum, it is disappointing to find that Brown employs the notion of dialectics as little more than a catchword. A thoughtful presentation of some of these problems would have constituted a real step towards a comprehensive Marxist psychology: a book which pretends to have the answers does not.

Phil Brown is to be applauded for working in an area which Marxist have generally neglected and I do not wish to judge too harshly a book which is motivated primarily by the concerns of the activist. Nonetheless, while I share Brown's wish that the struggle against the oppressive characteristics of the mental health industry be advanced, I hope that, as a summary of an important area, this unimportant volume will be quickly supplanted.

Barnaby B. Barratt

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SHORT JOURNAL REVIEWS[1]:

ALTERNATIVE, Vol. 17, No. 97 (1974)

LOUIS ALTHUSSER, *"Bertolazzi und Brecht."* A chapter from *For Marx* not in the German edition. K.M. BOGDAL, *"Kunst-Ideologie-Erkenntnisse."* Althusser's categories are discussed within the framework of the "theory of aesthetic praxis." PETER SCHOETTLER, *"Philosophie-Politik-Wissenschaft."* A recapitulation of Althusser's most important (pseudo) categories. OTTO KALLSCHENER, *"'Anti-Hegelianismus' innerhalb der Arbeiterbewegung."* An attempt to ground the anti-Hegelian positions of Althusser and Della Volpe in an historical context with an emphasis on their development within the French and Italian CP.

ARENA (Australia), No. 36 (1974)

JOE CAMILLERI, *"Under Labor: Aboriginal Land Rights."* The Australian Labor Party's stated objective—"to restore to the Aboriginal people of Australia their lost power of self-determination in economic, social, and political affairs"—has thus far failed to materialize for it fails to understand the contradiction between the importance of black attachment to tribal land and the domination of nature themes rooted in capitalist society. DOUG WHITE, *"Aboriginal Cultures: The New Welfare."* With no military general staff, no independent state, Aboriginal resistance to white imperialism was largely of an isolated guerilla-type activity, followed by a period of passive resistance, itself rooted in an "underground" traditional culture. This remaining resistance is now again under seige as new forms of material and cultural suppression and destruction come in the guise of state programs of "welfare," "autonomy," and "involvement." JOHN HINKSON, *"Currency Crisis: Money as the Measure of Capitalist Decline."* Current international concern about economic crisis in modern industrial capitalism must also include an understanding of its impact on, and its regulation by, the cultural dimension. An analysis of the 1930s depression and the changed post-war capitalist structure suggests that the twenty-five year post-war boom was accompanied by contrary, irrational developments—the irrational growth of non-productive occupations, the reliance on the U.S. dollar as the unit of international currency, the massive development of environmentally destructive technologies and, most importantly, an irrational financial structure (banking and credit arrangements, the international monetary and credit system). It is argued that the present world economic situation is one of profound *financial* crisis, itself the backdrop against which "cultural re-orientation" can take place. HUMPHREY McQUEEN, *"Australian Cultural Elites."* John Docker's *Australian Cultural Elites* (1974) is critically examined. BOB CATLEY and BRUCE McFARLANE, *"The Limits of Technocratic Laborism."* According to the "technocratic labor" thesis—developed in earlier issues of *Arena*—between 1963 and 1968, there occurred within the Australian Labor Party a replacement of old-style 'laborists' with a coterie of highly-skilled, professional labor politicians and administrators. This ascending group, representing the Austrlian 'technostructure,' worked to obtain the benefits of 'scientized' industrial capitalism for the skilled working class and the middle classes, largely at the expense of undifferentiated labor. But accelerating inflation, reduction in net take-home pay, and rising unemployment has led to a widespread working class revolt against (and a consequent partial abandonment of) the technocratic policies of Whitlamism. The conclusion: technocratic laborism cannot work under conditions of sharp economic conflict, inflation-induced uncertainty about social cohension, and threats to the capital accumulation process posed by militant economism.

AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW, No. 45 (October 1974)

PAUL NURSEY-BRAY, *"Africa Without Portugal: Prospects for Liberation."* This is an analysis of the background of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. The factors promoting, and the consequences of, the winning of independence by these colonies are examined particularly with reference to the general struggle against imperialist oppression in Africa and the South African racist regime. LEONIE SANDERCOCK, *"Interview with Chesnaux."* Professor of History at the Sorbonne and eminent writer on Asia, Chesnaux discusses the class nature of the ecology

1. This section was prepared by the Toronto *Telos* Group composed of Ben Agger, Ilene Crawford, John Keane, Steve Levine, Folke Lindahl, Janet Lum, Ray Morrow, Peter Murphy, Patrick Patterson, Paul Piccone, Greg Renault, Brian Singer, Wodek Szemberg, Nick Xenos.

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movement. Environmental destruction must be understood as a by-product of the capitalist mode of production. "Stationary capitalism" is a contradiction in terms. ROY MEDVEDEV, *"The Gulag Archipelago."* A reprint from *New Left Review*, 85, featuring some vehement criticism of the Soviet regime. *"Detente."* The Left's attitude toward detente between the 'superpowers' is discussed. This is a translation of an important editorial which appeared in the Vietnam Workers' Party organ *Nhan Dan* on the occasion of the 1972 Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Georgetown, Guyana. ALASTAIR DAVIDSON, *"Gramsci and the Facotry Councils."* First of a two-part article, this is a discussion of the background of the rise of the factory council movement in post-World War I Italy and, via previously untranslated material, Gramsci's attitude towards it.

AUT AUT, Nos. 142-143 (July-October 1974)
Special Issue on "Theory and the Role of Intellectuals."

FRANCO FORTINI, *"Per le Origini di* Quaderni Piacentini *e* Quaderni Rossi." An historical account of the genesis of two very influential journals in Italian New Left circles during the 1960s. ROBERTA TOMASSINI, *"Intellettuali fra Ideologia e Scienza Operaia."* An analysis of the role of intellectuals with special emphasis on the work of Asor Rosa and Fortoni. MARIA GRAZIA MERIGGI, *"Fine dell'Intellettuale Organico e Ricomposizione di Classe."* A systematic critique of Macciocchi's new book *Pour Gramsci* as a reformist attempt to de-activate Gramsci's thought along new Communist Party guidelines. MASSIMO PIERDICCHI, *"Scheda su Asor Rosa."* An analysis of Asor Rosa's parabolic development, ultimately shipwrecking back into the Italian Communist Party. PIER ALDO ROVATTI, *"Filosofia e Politica. Il Caso Althusser."* An analysis of Althusser's development up to the most recent works seen as an orthodox Communist Party attempt to concretely deal with political and theoretical problems of the 1960s. The whole thing is seen as a major regression from the high point of May '68. AMEDEO VIGORELLI, *"Filosofia come Scienza: Galvano della Volpe e l'Autocritica dello Storicismo Marxista."* A study of the implications of Della Volpe's "scientization" of Marxism and its counter-revolutionary implications—particularly within the PCI orthodoxy. GIANPIERO ASCENSO, *"Per una Lettura della Tesi Filosofiche di Mao."* An attempt to relate Mao's two philosophical essays, "On Contradiction" and "On Praxis" to the Cultural Revolution. RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA, *"Rottura e Ambivalenza Filosofica in Lenin."* Italian translation of an article originally published in English in *Telos* No. 5 (Spring 1970). *"Sulle Tesi di Oskar Negt a Proposito della Genesi della Filosofia Stalinista."* A debate concerning Stalinist philosophy between Josef Schleifstein, Oskar Negt and Alfred Schmidt.

BERKELEY JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, Vol. XIX (1974-75)

A. MODELL and H. WAITZKIN, in *"Medicine and Socialism in Chile,"* describe some of the changes that have occurred in the Chilean health system under the Unidad Popular government. I.L. HOROWITZ, *"Sociology and Futurology: The Contemporary Pursuit of the Millenium,"* probes the changes accompanying the move from the sixties to the seventies, emphasizing its discontinuity and the various factors which integrate oppositional forces. P. JOSEPH and D. PLOTKE, in *"Reply to I.L. Horowitz,"* present a left critique of Horowitz's pessimism. E.O. WRIGHT, *"To Control or to Smash Bureaucracy: Weber and Lenin on Politics, the State and Bureaucracy."* An interesting article comparing Weber's and Lenin's contributions to understanding the state in late capitalism. MARCIO ALVES, *"The Political Economy of Brazilian Technology."* Brazil has failed to raise itself out of 'underdevelopment' even with the introduction of advanced technology. Thus, the claim that Brazil provides a 'showcase' model for other underdeveloped countries is an illusion. CARLOS MOORE, *"Were Marx and Engels White Racists?"* JEROME HIMMELSTEIN, *"Marx and Engels are Dead: An Editorial Reply to Carlos Moore."* CARL MACK, *"When is an Aryan not an Aryan? An Addendum to Carlos Moore."* CARL BOGGS, *"Gramsci's Theory of the Factory Councils: Nucleus of the Socialist State."* The councils are seen as institutions which overcome the opposition of particular political and economic interests in contrast to institutions such as the Social Democratic Party and trade unions which remain tied to capitalism. DAVID GLANZ, *"The Souls of Workers."* An extended review of *Work in America* published by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. He pulls in Marx's *Grundrisse* and André Gorz. P.R.

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ELMORE and T.R. KENDAL, *"Journal of Negative Results: Under Privileged Research."* Discusses what happens when the conclusions reached by a research project go against those who sponsored it.

CRITIQUE, No. 2 (1974)

H. TICKTIN, in *"Political Economy of the Soviet Intellectual,"* argues that the socio-economic position of Soviet intelligentsia structurally determines their gravitation towards reactionary positions. The inner contradictions of this strata are discussed within the context of the relationship between the property relations and the mode of distribution. M. McAULEY, *"Political Change Since Stalin;"* D.S. LAW, *"The Left Opposition in 192 ;"* D.H. RUBEN, *"On Dialectical Relations."* A very interesting discussion of the problematic nature of the dialectical method. Ruben argues that bi-directional (symmetric) and uni-directional (asymmetric) relations can be fused together in a non-contradictory manner if a proper distinction between the objects (structure) and its properties (content) can be articulated methodologically as well as empirically.

ECONOMY AND SOCIETY, Nos. 3-4 (November 1974)

GEOFF HODGSON, *"Marxian Epistemology and the Transformation Problem."* Since Marx, it is claimed, *founded* a science, but did not complete its investigation, Marxism must be a "living science." Marx's solution to the problem of deriving prices from embodied labor values—the "transformation problem"—is stated and discussed. The inconsistencies inherent within Marx's solution are exposed via a citation of some of Marx's self-doubt about the adequacy of his own solution. Bortkiewicz's solution is considered, modified, and extended from formal economics to epistemology. The epistemological status of such concepts as value, price of production, and the general rate of profit is discussed, together with an interpretation of Marx's epistemology and its relation to the transformation problem and the labor theory of value. ANIBAL QUIJANO OBREGON, *"The Marginal Pole of the Economy and the Marginalized Labor Force."* This paper proposes the concept of the 'marginal pole' of the economy to characterize a new level of Latin American economic activity which has a precarious relationship with the basic means of production controlled by the dominant levels of the economy as a whole. The "marginalized labor force" employed here is a distinct new sector within the working population. It is argued that the concept of "marginalized labor force" is more appropriate in this case than that of "industrial reserve army" and enables certain consequences of marginalization to be analyzed. MARTIN SHAW, *"The Theory of the State and Politics: A Central Paradox of Marxism."* The widespread observation that, while Marx saw the withering away of the state as necessary for communism, the state in "Communist" societies has done everything but that, seems to indicate a self-undermining paradox in the Marxian theory. Yet, it is argued that the expansion of the state in "Communist" societies is only apparently contradictory to the Marxian theory, and that the theory in fact provides the basis for an understanding of this phenomenon. But the Marxian theory *is* paradoxical in the tension it postulates between the political and its social basis. The fundamental component of this theory is its demonstration of the dependence of the state and politics on society; the problem, then, is the very status of 'the political' and 'Marxist politics' as categories. Marxism itself demonstrates that the very existence of "politics in the direct and narrow sense of the word" is a product of an alienated society, and yet it posits a politics which necessarily exists partly in this very sense. The solution to this paradox lies in resolving the real tension between the social movement and its political expression. This solution is aided by the changing, more intimate relationship between the state and society. ROGER HALLAM, *"The Production of Poverty."* D. Wedderbrun, ed., *Poverty, Inequality and Class Structure* is critically reviewed at length.

L'HOMME ET LA SOCIETE, Nos. 31-32 (January-June 1974)

SAMIR AMIN, *"Eloge du socialisme."* This important essay has appeared in English in *Monthly Review*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (September 1974), under the title "In Praise of Socialism." HENRI LEFEBVRE, *"La production de l'espace."* In this interesting and important essay,

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which is extracted from the introduction to Lefebvre's new book of the same title, the author argues for a "unitary theory of space" which embraces the physical, mental and social aspects of space as part of a process of social production. He critiques various earlier attempts to treat the problem of space while setting the parameters for his own study. ADAM SCHAFF, *"L'aliénation en tant que problème philosophique."* Schaff presents an argument for the practical significance of Marx's theory of alienation. This essay will appear in English in *Essays in Political and Social Philosophy*, edited by Ted Honderich. ROGER BASTIDE, *"La femme de couleur en Amérique Latine."* This essay is the introduction to a forthcoming collective study of the same title. ALVIN W. GOULDNER, *"Le marxisme et la théorie sociale."* This essay has appeared in English in *Theory and Society*, Vol. 1, No. 1, under the title "Marxism and Social Theory." Gouldner discusses the tension between subjectivity and objectivity in Marxism through a dubious distinction between two "levels," i.e., the "scientific" and the "critical." DICK HOWARD, *"La théorie et la praxis de la théorie dialectique."* Howard argues for an understanding of Marxism as critique and "dialectical dialogue." ANDREW FEENBERG, *"Lukács et la critique du marxisme orthodoxe."* This essay has appeared in English in *The Philosophical Forum*, Vol. 3, Nos. 3-4 (Spring-Summer 1972), under the title "Lukács and the Critique of 'Orthodox' Marxism." Feenberg makes a strong argument that Lukács' Leninism, as formulated in his works of the 1920s, contains an immanent critique of Stalinism. LOUIS RIGAL, *"Veblen et Marx."* MICHEL MAFFESOLI, *"Histoire et utopie."* This is a very confused essay, in which the author attempts to delineate two strands of critical utopian thought, utilizing a vaguely Heideggerian framework. J.F.A. CLEMENT and F. CLEMENT, *"Ibn Khaldun, théoricien de l'inconscience."* ANDRE GUNDER FRANK, *"Anthropologie—Idéologie; Anthropologie appliquée—Politique."* MARION GLEAN O'CALLAGHAN and NICOLE GUILLAMIN, *"Race et Race... La mode 'naturelle' en sciences humaines."* VICTOR FAY, *"Le léninisme sous Lénine."* This essay is a discussion of the book *Leninism under Lenin*, by Marcel Liebman. L. NIZARD, *"A propos de l'Etat: Contribution à une analyse des idéologies institutionelles."* RENE BARBIER, *"Violence symbolique et pédagogie institutionnelle."*

THE INSURGENT SOCIOLOGIST, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall 1974)

ALEXANDER LIAZOS, *"Class Oppression: The Functions of Juvenile Justice."* Institutional and non-institutional programs for juveniles in the United States since the 1820s have served primarily an ideological function. By aiming at control and discipline of the poorer classes, they have tried to resocialize the boys and girls of the poor, working class, and minority groups to accept menial tasks on the periphery of the economy. While reforms may represent a slight advance over previous conditions, the true solution to juvenile delinquency is to attack the social system responsible for the problem itself—capitalism. JUDITH K. GRETHER, *"Existentialism on the Oppression of Women. What Can We Learn?"* This paper examines Sartre and De Beauvoir's existentialism to see what can be used to build a theory of women's oppression. A discussion focusing on existentialism as an ontology, and as an ethical or moral system provides the basis for De Beauvoir's analysis of the situation of women. Grether reveals De Beauvoir's contribution to be anachronistic as well as inadequate: De Beauvoir's solutions are full of contradictions stemming from the fundamental existentialist attempt to solve a social problem without addressing the social basis of that problem. Grether concludes that existentialism is not an adequate theory for the full understanding of sexual oppression. PAUL STEVENSON, *"Monopoly Capital and Inequalities in Swedish Society."* This article examines the record of the social democratic governments in Sweden in order to assess the source of increased social dissatisfaction with the performance of social democracy. Stevenson argues that Sweden is a monopoly capitalist country characterized by uneven development, ever-recurring social and economic crises, persistent inequalities in the distribution of wealth, income and power, persistent poverty, and a deeply-felt alienation on the part of the general population. He argues that Sweden's rapid economic growth has allowed for a relatively large per capita income increase; this has in turn permitted a reformist political program within the confines of Sweden's monopoly capitalist structure. However, the limits of such a policy appear to have been reached.

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KAPITALISTATE, Vol. 2 (1973)

This new bulletin sees itself as the communication link—sounding board among researchers engaged in studies of advanced capitalist and imperialist states. Rumor has it that a new issue is coming out soon. The second issue, dated December, 1973, is reviewed here. JIM O'CONNOR, *"Nixon's Other Watergate: The Federal Budget for Fiscal 1974."* TASUKU NOGUCHI, *"Recent Japanese Speculation."* STEPHAN LEIBFRIED, *"U.S. Central Government Reform of the Administrative Structure During the Ash Period (1968-1971)."* The Ash proposals are interpreted as typifying the administrative reform solutions to the planning problems of the state. The necessity for, but the impossibility of, coherent, long range state action gives rise to a new type of administrative structure and rationality. WOLFGANG HEIN and KONRAD STENZEL, *"The Capitalist State and Underdevelopment in Latin America—The Case of Venezuela."* Dependent states find their autonomy limited structurally (economically), politically and ideologically and hence function primarily as agents transmitting the global dynamics of the international division of labor to the national level and reproducing the exclusive nature of the internal political power structure according to these dynamics. The exclusiveness can be seen in state actions which have defined a population marginal to the market economy and the productive process. SHERRY GIRLING, *"Comments on Hamza Alavi, 'The State in Post-Colonial Societies—Pakistan and Bangladesh'* (New Left Review 74 [1972])." This article attempts to refute Alavi's thesis that the post-colonial state is not the instrument of a single ruling class but the mediator of three propertied classes. It proceeds to question if Alavi's redefinition radically alters whatever relative autonomy the state did have when it mediated fractions of a single propertied class. GERD JUNNE, *"Internationalization of Economic Processes and Fulfillment of State Functions."* This is a one-page statement of hypotheses concerning how the internationalization of production and of financial capital has weakened the coalescence of interest between industrial capital, financial capital and the state apparatus. BERTELL OLLMAN, *"State as a Value Relation."* This chapter from his book *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society* (Cambridge, 1971), describes how the state appears and functions as part of Marx's theory of alienation. SABINE SARDEI-BIERMANN, JENS CHRISTIANSEN, and KNUTH DOHSE, *"Class Domination and the Political System: A Critical Interpretation of Recent Contributions by Claus Offe."* CLAUS OFFE, *"The Abolition of Market Control and the Problem of Legitimacy (II)."* This continuation of an article begun in the first issue seeks the limitations of the legitimating mechanisms that had ensured the 'complementarity' in the structural discrepancy between capital accumulation and, its necessary requisite, non-capitalist infrastructure production. Such issues are glossed over in state monopoly capital theories. ELMAR ALTVATER, *"Notes on Some Problems of State Interventionism (II)."* After discussing the characteristics of the bourgeois state generally and the way in which it creates the material conditions for production in the last issue, the second part in this issue examines the state's attempts at crisis management and the problem of stagflation—a contradiction inherent in the Keynesian strategy of crisis avoidance. HUGO RADICE, *"The Conference of Socialist Economists,"* is a report on the development and perspectives of the CSE in Britain. *"Progress Reports"* presents a summary of ongoing research projects being conducted in various countries.

KURSBUCH, No. 35 (April 1974)

Theme: *Verkehrsformen. I. Frauen-Männer Linke. Ueber die Schwierigkeiten ihrer Emanzipation.* RUDOLF ZUR LIPPE, *"Objektiver Faktor Subjektivität."* Revolutionary strategy must be grounded in the "production of relations" rather than simply an ideology critique which cannot generate individual politicization and political movements. Only the "socially productive force of subjectivity" can concretely reveal and construct alternatives to the anxiety that permeates all social relations. The critical potential of the contradictory bourgeois affirmation of individual self-realization can only be unleashed through the immediate joining of the individual's problems with public discussion such that inner struggle becomes political experience. This presupposes that "forms of intercourse [*Verkehrsformen*] are a social objectification and the production of relations is therefore a political strategy" (p. 25). The notion of the "objective factor subjectivity" follows from the transformation of the classic relation of base and superstructure in late capitalist society, especially as manifested in the experience of student protest movements. *"Von der Veränderung des Menschen durch den Kampf:*

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Gespräche mit LIP-Arbeitern." Extracts from interviews with workers affected by auto-gestion experiments in a French watch factory. Taken from a volume by Arno Münster, *Der Kampf bei LIP* (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1974). ALICE SCHWARZER, *"Simone de Beauvoir—Jean-Paul Sartre: 'Ueber unsere Beziehung'."* According to this interview, De Beauvoir and Sartre attribute their ability to sustain a long-term egaliatarian relationship to not having ever lived together in a domestic situation. A. SCHWARZER, in another interview, *"Simone de Beauvoir: Ueber den Kampf für die Befreiung der Frau,"* reveals that Marxism has not taken the exploitation of the houswewife seriously enough; the female worker must be distinguished from the working wife. The liberation of women will never be realized through class struggle alone and a parallel movement is required. *"Anna, Laura, Louise, Mary, Wera: Die Sache der Frauen."* Excerpts from a weekend encounter session between five young women who reflect on their experiences as socialist-feminist activists who have found living with other women a more satisfactory adaptation to their personal needs. PETER SCHNEIDER, *"Die Sache mit der 'Männlichkeit': Gibt es eine Emanzipation der Männer?"* A sensitive male account of the difficulty of sustained relationships between "liberated" young couples. He explores nuances of Reich's thesis that the problem of every relationship is the simultaneous dulling of sensual desire and the growth of bonds of tenderness. The distance between objective possibilities and subjective realities is linked to the difficulty of overcoming early socialization to articulate authentic needs, a tsak which can only be obscured by the economistic reduction of love to sex, itself a reaction against the bourgeois reduction to spiritual factors. TIL SCHULZ, *"Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis: Abenteuer des falschen Bewusstseins."* The perpetual postponement of revolution has given the bourgeois conceptions of ontology and anthropology a descriptive validity which renders the Marxian critique all the more difficult. This can be seen in the way in which such assumptions have penetrated and shaped the behavior and modes of perception of revolutionary groups. Parallels between the grounding of struggle in existential terms as inner experience (total responsibility) in contemporary revolutionary theory and writers such as Ernst Jünger, Heidegger and Carl Schmitt are described. This phenomenon, most obvious in the case of urban guerillas, is related to the social psychological dynamics of paranoia where isolation and the imperative of total mobilization produce stereotyped thinking such that "those who wanted to create a weapon from sickness, make a sickness out of the weapon." In the process, struggle comes to change nothing and affirms the "eversameness" of bourgeois domination. WOLFGANG POHRT and MICHAEL SCHWARZ, *"Wegwerfbeziehungen: Versuch über die Zerstorung der Gebrauchswerte."* The swallowing up of the concrete demands of the revolutionary protest movement by the "culture industry" is attributed to an insufficient awareness of the fragile structure of the concept of "use-value." The strategy that the systematic destruction of use-values could be countered by a concrete-utopain counter vision of collectively experienced "sensuality, spontaneity and fantasy" was thus falsified by the capacity to positivistically reduce such demands to forms serviceable within the existing order. The category of use-value was treated abstractly, leaving intact the rigid content-based distinction between productive and unproductive labor. Thus it was not possible to retain the emancipatory intent of the concept in a world where material productivity could no longer be equated with usefulness and the gains of free time from labor absorbed by the culture industries. *Exkurse:* H.M. ENZENSBERGER, *"Auf dem Weg zur Schwarzen Marktwirtschaft."* A reflection on current economic shortages in which Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* aphorism is reversed: "What we today experience as crises of supply, that is the farce, which this time precedes the tragedy." AUGUSTO OLIVARES, *"Ein letzter Brief aus der Moneda."* Letter by a Chilean associate of Allende written the day before their deaths. ELVIO FACHINELLI, *"Wohin ist Lin Piao geblieben?"* The bizarre fate of Lin Piao is taken as an example of an unresolved contradiction of socialism in power: the inability to consistently analyze internal events in Marxian terms.

LIBERATION, Vol. 18, No. 10 (September-October 1974)

STANLEY ARONOWITZ, *"(Vice-) President Rockefeller?"* Rockefeller's (vice) presidential appointment breaches the unwritten taboo that had in the past prohibited overt incestuous relationships between the state and the largest corporations. His elevation was designed specifically to shore up the economy by reforging an organic state-corporation alliance—at the expense of the American people's standard of living. Protesting against Rockefeller's

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confirmation in the Senate, revealing the links between corporations and the state, thereby exposing the illusions of democratic politics, present an opportunity to make a broad-based anti-ruling class fight of national significance. HANS MAGNUS ENZENSBERGER, *"Dreamers of the Absolute,"* is a phenomenological narration of Russian socialist revolutionary terrorists belonging to the "Fighting Organization" at the turn of the century. Enzensberger avoids passing judgment on the terrorist actions. Instead, he makes the point that Marx was more correct than Lenin: while the latter denounced the terrorists' anarchic tendencies, thus missing the essence of their actions, Marx captures that essence when he called them "dreamers of the absolute." CAROL LOPATE, *"Approaches to Schools: The Perfect Fit."* This article reminds us that dominate and subordinate classes are in a dialectical relationship: dominance and oppression imply subordination and rebelliousness—something that recent radical educational theorists have tended to forget in their over-emphasis on the ideological capabilities of education to support the capitalist system. To go beyond the "perfect fit," one must seek the sources of rebelliousness within and between institutions. DAVID NASAW, *"Reconsidering Freire."* Freire is to radical educational theory as utopian socialist thought is to revolutionary socialist theory. Just as the latter locates its future outside of history, Freire can only see the transition from a dehumanized existence to a humanized essence through dialogue—a totally ahistorical liberating process. Says Nasaw, a revolutionary educational praxis must be developed within the boundaries of a dialectical relationship between formal schooling (committed to conformity) and education (committed to the actualization of one's potentiality, inherently subversive to the social order). A dialectical theory of education along such lines conceives history as a totality, locating its future possibility within the present.

MARXISMUS DIGEST, Heft 3, No. 19 (July-September 1974)
Special Issue on "Wachstum und Krise im Kapitalismus heute."

A series of articles which, with two exceptions, first appeared in Eastern Europe or the USSR. While generally conceptualized within the constraints of a "Marxist-Leninist" perspective, the essays retain some interest as a sample of the diversity of recent "crisis" theory. Especially noteworthy are the sober, non-rhetorical Soviet analyses of post-war economic cycles in the West, particularly the USA. Only the Czech Rumler draws any of the more general theoretical conclusions often implicit in these factual studies. J. ANSCHISCHKIN, *"Grundthesen der marxistischen Theorie der Produktionsfaktoren."* This excerpt from a book on the prognosis of socialist economic growth (Moscow, 1973), attempts to show the complementarity of Marx's theory of productive factors and the labor theory of value and the way in which this is reflected in Soviet economic statistics and planning practices. A. BORODAJEWSKI, in *"Die Besonderheiten des gegenwärtigen kapitalistischen Zyklus,"* symmarizes a discussion in the Scientific Council of the Institute for World Economics and International Relations held in Moscow, 1973. While the participants generally agreed that the cyclic pattern of capitalist economies can be attributed to the antagonistic contradictions of the process of capitalist reproduction, they emphasized different factors which have contributed to the comparative diminution and changed form of post-war cycles: the scientific-technical revolution, the development of "state-monopoly" capitalism and the structural changes in the economy, especially the relative expansion of the "non-productive" sectors. Little consensus could be found as to the classification of cycle phases or a definition and appropriate criteria for "crisis." MIROSLAV RUMLER, *"Die Abnahme der Wirksamkeit der Wertgesetzes als spontaner Makroregulator und die Zunahme von Planungselementen in der Wirtschaft des Monopolkapitalismus: Versuch einer allgemeintheoretischen Analyse"* (from *Politikeka Ekonomie,* Prague, 1973, Heft 3). In the transition from "competitive" to "monopoly" capitalism, the price system as an information system was progressively deformed, undermining its function as a source of spontaneous macro-regulation and as an instrument for the spontaneous continuation of scientific and organization progress. State intervention, even as it generated internal cleavages, became necessary for the preservation of the bourgeoisie as a whole and required limited participation of other classes. At this phase of development the tertiary sphere—which does not lend itself to price and profit mechanisms and hence the law of value—becomes the most dynamic source of growth. PETER HESS, *"Die allgemeine Krise des Kapitalismus—die Periode des revolutionären Uebergangs zum Sozialismus"* (from *Wirtschaftswissenschaft,* DDR). This is an optimistic account—sustained by citations from Lenin—that

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this is the epoch of the "general crisis" of capitalism which must inevitably culminate in the revolutionary upheaval of the proletariat. Only the precise "catalyst" remains unpredictable. PAUL BOCCARA, *"Zum Verständnis des Begriffs: Krise des staatsmonopolistischen Kapitalismus"* (from *Economie et politique,* Paris, 1972). The French Communist Party presents its views on the "general crisis." Accordingly, the years from 1967-1969 marks the "decisive phase" of the general crisis of "state-monopoly" capitalism. This new phase is distinguished from that of the 1914-1944 period primarily by the stabilizing intervention of the state which has simply deepened the contradictions. The political strategy of the French Communist Party in this context is outlined and defended. A. KANDEL, *"Akkumulation und Wirtschaftswachtum,"* presents a comparative analysis of the relationship between capital accumulation and economic growth in the USA, Japan and Great Britain in the post-war period. No strict relationship between rates of accumulation and growth is found. Development in the USA is characterized as intensive and "capital-neutral," that of Britain extensive and "capital-neutral" while that of Japan extensive and "capital-linked." B. PITSCHUGIN, *"Die gegenwärtige Etappe des kapitalistischen Zyklus."* The "asynchronic" economic crisis of 1970-71 is compared to the one culminating in 1957-58. While growth conditions had been restored by late 1972, inflation and American devaluations revealed deeper sources of instability, which indicated the possibility of more fundamental manifestations of contradictions at the end of that boom cycle. M. BARABONOW, *"Langfristige Tendenzen in der Wirtschaft der USA."* Two periods of American economic development (1869-1929 and 1929-1966) are compared, using Soviet statistical methodology. The most significant finding is that there was a more rapid growth of constant capital in the first period, resulting in the more dynamic growth of the material instruments of production relative to immaterial wealth (science, education, health) and consumption goods than in the second. This is explained in terms of the changes in the nature of the final product. Technical progress then can be capital intensive as well as capital-saving, falsifying any effort to postulate "eternal" or "absolute" laws with respect to the relationship between scientific-technical progress and changes in the relative proportions of the factors of production. It is predicted that in the 1970s, US economic policy will be directed toward the "intensive" growth factors, a strategy which will enhance the strategic role of variable capital and consequently of labor in the reproduction process. J. POKATAEV, *"Zyklen und Krisen der Nachkriegszeit in den USA."* The author admits that the success of the working class to gain wage increases has softened the sharpness of the contradictions. The peculiarity of post-war cycles is the overaccumulation of capital rather than the over-production of commodities. Also the failure of price declines due to monopolistic controls, inflation and the role of the state suggests a new phase of development. The appearance of "stagflation" signals the failure of Keynesian planning; the effort to attribute inflation to the Vietnam war overlooks the evidence of inflationary signs which preceded and were only accelerated by the war. I.M. OSADCAJA, *"Die neoklassische Theorie des Wirtschaftswachstums und einige Probleme, die sich aus seiner quantitativen Analyse ergeben."* The neo-classical theory of productive growth (Cobb-Douglas, Tinbergen, Clark, Denison, Solow), is critically reviewed in an effort to indicate its value, methodological deficiencies and apologetic uses. The technique of isolating the marginal contribution of production factors to economic growth is characterized as an interesting quantitative analytical instrument which must nevertheless be complemented by the qualitative changes described by social economy. Ron Bellamy, BELLAMY, *"Oekonomische Krisen im Kapitalismus als periodische Unterbrechungen im Rhythmus der Kapitalakkumulation"* (translation of a lecture given at the University of Amdsterdam in 1973). Discussion is confined to the special crises which occur whenever there is an absolute, or at least relative, decline in the rate of growth. An early "simple" monopoly capitalism is distinguished from present-day "state" monopoly capitalism. Particular stress is placed on the impact of arms expenditures. The theory of the sudden collapse of capitalism is rejected as foreign to Marx; capitalism will only be buried by its own, conscious gravediggers—the organized working class.

MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 26, No. 4 (September 1974)

SAMIR AMIN, *"In Praise of Socialism."* Amin considers culture—the mode of organization of the utilization of use values—in capitalist and non-capitalist aspects. While precapitalist social formations are based on the direct apprehension of use values, the introduction of the inter-

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mediary of exchange value in capitalist society has the tendency to fragment and destroy the quality of cultural life. As the negation of use value, capitalism is also the negation of cultural diversity in prime areas of experience such as space and time. The answer to the ultimate society of terror implied by capitalism can only be a socialist society, a mediated return to the diversity of direct apprehension of use values. BARBARA EHRENREICH, in *"Democracy in China,"* presents personal impressions of the meaning to the Chinese people of the present movement in China criticizing Lin Piao and Confucious. She finds it represents a moment in the ongoing process of Marxist education. JAMES BOGGS, *"Beyond Militancy"* outlines the development of black militancy in the American auto industry in the past forty years. JOHN SAUL, *"Portugal and the Mozambican Revolution."* Saul evaluates the present post-coup situation from the perspectives of the Portuguese metropolis, Portugal's allies, Mozambique itself, the independent African nations, and supporters of FRELIMO. Saul re-affirms the depth and strentgh of the new revolutionary society, while showing some of the new problems facing it.

MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 26, No. 5 (October 1974)

RAYFORD BODDY and JAMES CROTTY, *"Class Conflict, Keynesian Policies, and the Business Cycle."* This article formulates a class-conflict theory of short-run macro-policy, which assumes that the maximization of corporate profits is the objective of government macro-policy. This policy requires the vicissitudes of the business cycle, and subjects workers to continued attempts to introduce economic controls. BEN STAVIS, *"China's Green Revolution."* An evaluation of the modernization of the agricultural sector in China in the areas of production and management shows that China compares favorably with other Asian countries. NAVED HAMID, *"Alternative Development Strategies."* Hamid participates in the current debate on the rethinking of strategies for developing countries by using the example of Pakistan to examine the achievements and failures of the development policies of the 1960s. He assesses the chances of the present strategy, and suggests an alternative strategy of development: that, given the appropriate political-economic framework, development without foreign aid is possible.

NEW GERMAN CRITIQUE, No. 3 (Fall 1974)

KARL KORSCH, *"The Crisis of Marxism."* This document, written in 1931 and published for the first time four years later, is an attempt to understand the reasons for the inability of Marxism to act in a revolutionary manner. Korsch sees the roots of this incongruent relationship of the theory with the praxis in the transformation of Marxism from a 'living' account of historical conditions into a fetishized ideology. This document, however, being very short, tends to leave many questions open by not really articulating the ambiguities which led Korsch in the direction of being stuck with antinomies. EUGENE LUNN, *"Marxism and Art in the Era of Stalin and Hitler: A Comparison of Brecht and Lukács."* This interestingly written account of the Brecht-Lukács debate expresses firmly the author's sympathy for Brechtian revolutionary modernism and his sometimes undialectical critique of Lukács' 'high cultural' idealism. The attempt to link Brecht's and Lukács' aesthetic concepts with their political positions is methodologically valuable, but in the case of Brecht, sometimes distorted. JUERGEN HABERMAS, *"The Public Sphere."* This short article, written for an encyclopedia, is based on a larger work by Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Oeffentlichkeit*, in which Habermas develops the notion of public sphere and shows its historical character. Public sphere, being a modern historical phenomenon, is supposed to have a mediatory function between the state and society. ROMAN ROSDOLSKY, *"Comments on the Method of Marx's Capital."* Rosdolsky's discussion of Marxian economic thought places its focus on the dialectically historical nature of *Grundrisse* and *Capital*. Its emphasis on the relationship between form and content and the dialectics of appearance and essence provides us with a good introduction to the Hegelian sources of Marxism. JOST HERMAND, *"The 'Good New' and the 'Bad New': Metamorphoses of the Modernism Debate in the GDR since 1956."* MICHAEL SCHNEIDER, *"Neurosis and Class Struggle: Toward a Pathology of Capitalist Commodity Society."* The proposed thesis of Schneider's article is that "with the tendency toward abstraction in the historical development of commodity and money structure, there occurs a similar tendency toward abstraction within the social structure of needs and drives." WOLFGANG NITSCH, *"The Brandt Affair and the SPD: Depersonalizing History."*

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NEW LEFT REVIEW, No. 86 (July-August 1974)

LUCIO COLLETTI, *"A Political and Philosophical Interview."* This is an important interview conducted by Perry Anderson, in which Colletti discusses his relation to Della Volpe, Althusser, Gramsci and contemporary currents of Italian Marxism, and explains his work on Kant's epistemology, Rousseau's political theory, and Marx. Like much of Colletti's work it is alternately illuminating and infuriating. PEKKA HAAPAKOSKI, *"Breshnevism in Finland."* This article is an account of the history of the Finnish Communist Party (SKP) which attempts to explain the recent (post-1968) growth of a pro-Soviet minority and particularly its attraction of young workers and students. ERNEST MANDEL, *"Solzhenitsyn, Stalinism and the October Revolution."* This essay is a critique of Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* which makes some important points despite the author's Trotskyist blinders. BOB ROWTHORN, *"Neo-Classicism, Neo-Ricardianism and Marxism."* Rowthorn presents a structuralist argument that a Marxist and a neo-Ricardian political economy are incompatible. ERNST LABROUSSE, *"Observations on a New History of Modern France."* This is a review article of *France 1848-1945, Vol. I: Ambition, Love and Politics* (Oxford University Press, 1973), by Theodore Zeldin. DAVID WILSON, *"The Phenomenon of the Great Fear."* This article is a review of *The Great Fear of 1789* (NLB, 1973), by Georges Lefebvre.

OUR GENERATION, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Summer 1974)

MICHEL RAPTIS, *"What Kind of Socialism in Chile?"* written and published in France in 1973 by Edition Anthropos, Paris, before the September 1973 coup, is reprinted here on the anniversary of the coup. Using the theme of participation and self-management, Raptis traces its historical origins in the earliest workers' struggles, its interpretation by various parties and colours of the Left, its implementation by the Unidad Popular under Allende and its role in precipitating the seditious bourgeois strike. The heterogeneous ideological positions within the UP and hence in the definition of the "socialism" that was to guide Chile allowed for tensions and polarizations between workers backed by radical elements struggling to further their participation, more reformist elements pushing for "statism" and evolutionary socialism within "constitutional legality" and finally the petty bourgeoisie who wanted guarantees to preserve the private sector. Raptis saw the general strike as a positive catalyst for increased mass participation. Workers were obliged to resolve by their own means all problems related to maintaining production, distribution, transportation, etc. It is only towards the end of the article that Raptis alludes to "those objective factors" (e.g., whether socialism in Chile is compatible with her present relation with the United States), which, from hindsight we know to have been decisive in transforming the question of statism vs. self-management to one of socialism vs. fascism.

LA PENSEE, No. 176 (August 1974)

LOUIS ALTHUSSER, *"Justesse et Philosophie."* This short extract defines philosophy. Philosophical propositions cannot be proven "vrai" but only "juste." This implies a relation not with theory, but with praxis. In order to clarify this relation the term "juste" is not to be confused with "justice"—an ideological term—but it should be understood as "justesse." And the term 'justesse" is not to be used in its subjectivist-pragmatist sense, but in the sense of an "ajustement" to the struggles within a given conjuncture. The introduction accompanying this extract claims that Althusser has attempted to correct the "theoreticist" tendencies that marred his earlier work. L. BEHAR, *"Surpopulation Relative et Reproduction de la Force de Travail. Pour une Problématique Matérialiste en Démographie."* This article examines Marx's critique of Malthus. It notes that for Marx there were no general laws of production; only laws of population specific to each mode of production. Beyond this, little else of value is said. B. FONOU-TCHUIGOUA, *"Marché Réel et Marché Formel de Force de Travail."* This essay distinguishes between juridical property relations and economic property relations, and suggests that the former is related to particular forms of capitalism, while the latter is related to capitalism in general. The "free" labor market is articulated at the level of juridical property relations and is therefore not a necessary element in the definition of the "proletariat;" under certain circumstances the "proletariat can sell his labor power (without entering into the 'free' labor market) in the form of merchandise." Thus the author enlarges the concept of proletariat

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to include certain types of labor found in his native Africa. JACQUE CHALIEU, *"Remarques sur: Travail Simple, Travail Qualifié et Hiérarchie des Salaires en Economie Marchande Capitaliste."* Marx suggested that the remuneration paid to complex labor could be deduced from that paid to simple labor. According to Chalieu, this deduction was only noted at the level of appearance; it was not explained at the level of scientific analysis. After four pages of formulas, this particular gap is filled. Obligatory references are made to the scientific rigor of Marx's thought and the twin dangers of empiricism and theoreticism. JEAN BRUHAT, *"Un Militant Ouvrier à la fin du Second Empire: Eugène Varlin."* CHARLES GRIVEL, *"Les Mécanismes de la Censure dans le Système Libéral-Bourgeois."* The term censorship is discussed according to three different types: (a) overt censorship maintained by the repressive apparatus of the state; (b) "internal" censorship embedded in the dominant ideology; (c) censorship stemming from the economic mechanisms involved in the production and distribution of cultural goods. The first type is dealt with quite comprehensively and even perceptively. The scope and implications of the second and third types are too broad and the discussion is necessarily haphazard and abstract, though not uninteresting.

POLITICAL THEORY, Vol. 2, No. 3 (August 1974)

JOHATHAN WEINER, *"Quentin Skinner's Hobbes."* Skinner has made an important contribution to the study of Hobbes by placing his thought in the context of mid-seventeenth century English political and intellectual history. However, his conception of "historical context" is too narrow, and must be broadened to be less exclusively concerned with the intellectual history of the 1650s and more explicitly comparative, speculative and theoretical. With a broad range of recent studies of Hobbes, Weiner describes how this approach has been done. GORDON SCHOCHET, *"Quentin Skinner's Method."* Skinner's historical methodology requires understanding the intellectual climate within which the political philosopher writes. Though favorable to Skinner's suggestions, Schochet concludes with four criticisms: Skinner miminizes the influence of the present on the understanding of political thought; his emphasis on intention does not permit hindsightful readings; there is no indication of how to recognize political thought; and his reasons for studying political theory are incomplete. QUENTIN SKINNER, *"Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action."* Skinner discusses his critics and discloses two implications he sees in his approach. The first is concerned with exactly what should be studied in the history of political thought, and the second is interested in analyzing the relation between the ostensible principles and the practical political life of the relevant era. PHILIP ABBOTT, *"The Tyranny of Fraternity in McWilliams' America."* Based on McWilliams' *The Idea of Fraternity in America*, this essay explores the profoundly conservative conception of politics in this study of political thought. The discussion centers around the major objections to using the idea of fraternity as a basis for a philosophy of politics and the attempt to reconcile this by grounding it on the presumption of "man's nature." WILSON CAREY McWILLIAMS, *"Fraternity and Nature: A Response to Philip Abbott."* This rebuttal examines Abbott's treatment of the terms fraternity, human nature, and modern politics in his commentary of McWilliams. WILLIAM LEISS, *"Critical Theory and its Future."* Originating as a radical theory of culture, intended to assist the transition from capitalism to socialism in the 1930s, "critical theory" had as its point of departure the disappearance of classical liberalism, and its impetus in the rise of fascism. In this context, its significance can be seen in its attempt to resolve the issue of whether or not the dialectic of capitalist society could provide a class that could facilitate the transformation to universal emancipation. Crucial here is the socio-cultural mechanisms responsible for domination and subordination in bourgeois society; and it is in clarifying this problematic that critical theory contributed significantly to the progress of radical social thought.

POLITICS AND SOCIETY, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Winter 1974)

ALAN WOLFE, *"New Directions in the Marxist Theory of Politics."* Two interpretations of Marx's theories of the state are presented. The first, focusing on Marx's pre-1847 writings and traceable through Lukács, Korsch and the contemporary interest in alienation, stresses the importance of transcending in practice the false universality of ideology. There are two variants of the second reading. Both are based on Marx and Engels' later works—Lenin's (and Moore's) view of the state as an instrument of class oppression, and the Althusserian understanding of

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the capitalist state as the cementer and legitimating agent of capitalist social relations. It is argued that these two interpretations, taken alone, are insufficient for the development of a coherent theory of the capitalist state. The neo-Hegelian theory is ambiguous, ungrounded, and underrates the importance of intra- and inner-class conflict in constantly reshaping the state. The Leninist perspective often results in "mechanistic determinism," smudges the dialectical relationship between form and content (the state is seen as a "shell" equally controllable by any class) and tends (along with Althusser and Poulantzas) to view the state from an "all or nothing" point of view, collapsing Gorz's distinction between revolutionary and non-revolutionary reforms. He concludes with an argument for viewing the state as a double-edged process: the capitalist state both extracts something from *and* imposes something alien upon its subjects. The highest contradiction in the capitalist state is that it must simultaneously be a class state and a universal state. In conclusion, two important theoretical tasks remain: (1) understanding how the capitalist state came historically to have its particular contradictory character; and (2) suggesting approaches for future studies of the reproduction of alienation in capitalist societies. AMY BETH BRIDGES, *"Nicos Poulantzas and the Marxist Theory of the State."* This essay explicates the theoretical assumptions of *Pouvoir Politique et Classes Sociales* and points to its recognition that the state is neither simply and intimately tied to civil society nor a mere instrument of the ruling class. JEAN-CLAUDE GIRARDIN, *"On the Marxist Theory of the State."* A slightly edited version of an essay which first appeared in *Les Temps Modernes* (September-October 1972). Marx and Engels have not provided a full-blown theory of the state. However, their view that the contradiction originating in the productive forces-productive relations dichotomy is reflected in its institutionalized form at the super-structural level gives rise to two possible theories of the state. In the first (taken up by the First International, Stalin and Althusser), the state is seen to function only to insure the maintenance of the economic structure and, as an aspect of the class in power, becomes the "prize of the revolution" without being called into question itself. The second sees the state only as a product of class struggle and must therefore be shattered by the revolution. The state in its separate institutions (police, justice, school, etc.) is essentially a mediating system for social life. A revolutionary practice must pose the problems of the end of these separate institutions, which the masses must re-appropriate in the revolution. SUSAN BOURQUE and JEAN GROSSHOLTZ, *"Politics as Unnatural Practice: Political Science Looks at Female Participation."* VINCENTE NAVARRO, *"The Underdevelopment of Health or the Health of Underdevelopment."*

PRAXIS, 4eme Trimestre (1973)

SVETOZAR STOJANOVIC, *"From Post-revolutionary Dictatorship to Socialist Democracy."* In a paper read at the Korcula Summer School in August, 1971, Stojanovic argues that the Yugoslav break with Stalinism has not been "radical" enough. He suggests that "radical socialist democracy" will only be brought about by "differentiation within the political hierarchy, and the spontaneous rise of a leftist workers' and intellectuals' movement from below." Stojanovic is essentially arguing that de-Stalinization in Yugoslavia has been insufficient, and that the *interregnum* of workers' self-management has become mythified ans ossified. IVAN KUVACIC, *"Middle-Class Ideology."* Kuvacic writes about the middle class archetype which supports late capitalism. He suggests that the middle class constitutes the mechanisms with which bourgeois society "rejuvenates itself." This is an analysis of "one-dimensionality," an attempt "to reach the source of middle class ideology." ZAGORKA GOLUBOVIC, *"Why is Functionalism More Desireable in Present-Day Yugoslavia than Marxism?"* This is a paper about the 'functionalization' and hierarchization of Yugoslav political reality. The author suggests that Yugoslavia is best described functionally as a "social system which exists for its own sake." Humanist Marxian critique is suppressed in a society "in which the truth about society is not supposed to be said." Yugoslav sociology should, instead of ignoring fundamental systemic conflicts and contradictions, regard these as central and important. Only in this way can trivial, undialectical functionalism be superseded.

QUEST: A FEMINIST QUARTERLY, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Summer 1974)

KAREN COLLIAS, *"Spiral of Change: An Introduction to Quest."* This introductory article identifies a number of weaknesses in the past theory of women's movement: the notion of the

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"individualist solution;" the lack of an adequate theory; the tactic of the rebellion of the powerless that produces illusions of power and victory but few concrete, progressive changes. *Quest* intends to be a forum for the development of feminist theory and practice. NANCY HARTSOCK, *"Political Change: Two Perspectives on Power."* The author develops and contrasts two concepts of power: power in capitalist society, i.e., the ability to make people do things they would not otherwise do; power as the ability to help people and transform their lives and do things they otherwise couldn't. The goal of the women's movement is the substitution of the latter for the former through the abolition of capitalism. This requires the development of an organizational structure that expresses new positive forms of power while effectively combatting the old. FRANCES HORNSTEIN, *"An Interview on Women's Health Politics: Party 1."* This interview with representatives of the Feminist Women's Health Clinic, a California-based group, clearly articulates the strategy behind self-help projects—the subversion of established institutions via the development of power over one's own life. While this tendency negates and transcends the anti-leadership, anti-structure position characteristic of an eralier stage of the women's movement, it errs in its view of the development of alternative institutions as the parimary (if not only) means and end of social change. CHARLOTTE BUNCH, *"The Reform Tool Kit."* Bunch addresses the much-debated question of the role of reforms. She argues a Luxemburgist position; specific reforms must be evaluated according to their ability to create the material, ideological and political conditions for more fundamental social change. DOLORES BARGOWSKI, *"Moving Media—'The Exorcist'."* RITA MAE BROWN, *"The Good Fairy."* The author talks about two things: what she refers to as American's concept of change and changes in bodily mannerisms, posture and voice that reflect a feminist or feminist-lesbian consciousness. Underlying her analysis are three assumptions: the notion of "upper-class and middle-class women's control over lower-class women;" the division of "change" into the categories of material (abortions, day care, etc.) and the emotional-spiritual (lesbianism), and finally the notion that heterosexuality is the means of male supremacy. While her observations on mannerisms and oppression are valuable, her analysis lacks adequate comprehension of notions of class as well as of the meaning of the economic dimension in the concept of change. ROSISKA DARCY DE OLIVEIRA and MIRIELLE CALAME, *"Liberation of Women—To Change the World and Reinvent Life."* The authors identify three factions within the women's movement: (1) the "existentialists" concerned with the transformation of repressive psycho-sexual relationships; (2) the "egalitarians" whose program is gaining equality with men within capitalist society; (3) the "anti-capitalists" whose analysis roots oppression in the economic exploitation of the working class. They then argue that these are moments of "elementary perception" within the women's movement that should be theoretically united. The limitation of the article is that it calls for the invention of theory prior to examination of the present theoretical state of the various factions and their negative or counterrevolutionary potential.

RADICAL AMERICA, Vol. 8, No. 4 (July-August 1974)

MARGERY DAVIDS, *"Woman's Place is at the Typewriter: The Feminization of the Clerical Labor Force."* Relying heavily on statistical data, periodicals and novels, this essay focuses on the 'feminization' of the clerical work force. This essay is aimed at "first clarifying the role of a 'secretarial proletariat' and...broadening the definition of the working class to include other than those in industrial production." STAUGHTON LYND, *"The United Front in America: A Note."* The strategy of the Communist Party was initiated as a response to the growing disenchantment with liberalism and with Roosevelt, rather than as an anti-fascist position. This improvisation, on the basis of American needs, rather than the following of an international line, marks the development of the coalition between the popular-front and united-front prevalent in the 1930s. NOEL IGNATIN, *"Black Workers, White Workers."* Exposing the function and perpetuation of racism in both capitalist practice and ideology, followed by a demand for political opposition to these racist institutions and practices, are the two major themes. Essential to this opposition is defining the relation of the black movement to the general class struggle which must be maintained even at the risk of depriving the Left of some of its short run support. LINDA GORDON, *"The Politics of Population: Birth Control and the Eugenics Movement."* This essay discusses the birth control movement, its historical development, the influence of eugenics and its eventual conservative decline into "Planned

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Parehthood" and "population control," as well as its significance to capitalist ideology and imperialism. STAN WEIR, *"Work in America: Encounters on the Job."* These three anecdotal vignettes of incidents experienced by workers while on the job describe actual power held by these seemingly unimportant and impotent individuals. JAMES GREEN, *"Rebels in the Ranks: A Review Essay."* This review contrasts *Rank and File: Personal Histories of Working Class Organizers*, ed. Alice and Staughton Lynd, with Studs Terkel's new book, *Working*. Whereas Terkels' book is a collection of rather fragmentary interviews, the Lynds' collection of workers' stories contains not only interviews but a series of personal histories. As compared with Terkels' book, *"Rank and File* is the more interesting...for activists, because it shows how the individual workers fought together to overcome alienation and oppression," rather than just explaining how they suffered.

RADICAL SCIENCE JOURNAL, No. 1 (January 1974)

MIKE HALES, *"Management Science and 'The Second Industrial Revolution'."* The positivist, natural-scientific approach of operational research, scientific management and management science reflects the particular understanding of the character of capitalist social relations: it embodies an instrumental interest. But, it is argued, the increasing socialization of labor (within, e.g., the trans-national corporation) contains the potential of transcending capitalism; conversely, management science carries (unconsciously) the promise that 'those managing' can be the same as 'those doing.' DAVID DICKSON, *"Technology and the Construction of Social Reality."* An argument against the myth of technology as "politically neutral." Technology is seen as a socio-political institution and not merely "a set of machines and tools." Technology both materially and symbolically sustains the political system. Technology therefore shares the same structure as that of the dominant (and dominating) modes of social interaction in a capitalist society. JACK STAUDER, *"The 'Relevance' of Anthropology to Colonialism and Imperialism,"* traces the institutional origins and early growth of British anthropology. Anthropology, as an "applied science," is seen to be interwoven with nineteenth-century British imperialism and, more recently, U.S. imperialism. He concludes with a call for anthropologists to "ally" with the dominated—tribesmen, peasants, and working class people at home and abroad.

REVIEW OF RADICAL POLITICAL ECONOMICS, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1974)

HOWARD WACHTEL, *"Class Consciousness and Stratification in the Labor Process."* The consolidation of competitive capitalism and the concomitant homogenization of the workers' skills has been supplanted by a stratification of workers with the transition from competitive to monopoly capitalism. The net effect is to divide labor along status lines, thereby mitigating a proletarian class solidarity. But politically portent contradictions can still be found in the proliferation of hierarchically stratified relations of production which has become a fetter on the expansion of the productive forces as evidenced by a decline in productivity, absenteeism, sabotage, etc. JAY MANDLE, *"The Plantation Economy and Its Aftermath,"* examines the sharecropping nature of the Southern plantation economy that persisted after the Civil War, the capitalist dynamics that eventually released the Black labor force to the industrial North, the changing position of the Black labor force in the post-WWII occupational structure and the increasing stratification among Blacks that has decreased ethnic solidarity and can possibly increase a bi-racial working class solidarity. RICHARD HURD, *"Organizing the Working Poor: The California Grape Strike Experience."* This article describes the aims, tactics, successes and setbacks of the United Farm Workers Union under the organizing efforts of Cesar Chavez from its beginnings to the present. MARGARET LEVI, in *"Poor People Against the State,"* refutes the contention that the urban poor—the unemployed, welfare recipients, prisoners, low-income tenants—are unorganizable. Rather, they form the backbone of some of the most militant groups in the U.S. today. New Dealism forms of state interventionism has catalyzed but restrained the political organization of the poor, reproducing the conditions for organization and possibly paving the way for more insurgent activity in the future. SAMUEL BOWLES, *"The Integration of Higher Education into the Wage Labor System."* This article projects that political expressions of the contradictions in higher education may take on a more radical form in the future. Contradictions can be found in the relationship between expanding

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enrollment which is essential for legitimizing the class structure, allowing for its reproduction; increased material well-being and the tendency for most white-collar work to become proletarianized. Tensions result when college students aspiring for more relevant education face a vocationalization of higher education which reflects the requirements of the economy for more technocrats and bureaucrats.

ELLIOTT SCLAR, TED BEHR, RAYMOND TORTO, and MARALYN EDID, in *"Taxes, Taxpayers and Social Change: The Political Economy of the State Sector,"* explain that although people agree with progressive taxation, tax reform as the vehicle for social change is tricky. Learning their lessons from the failures of a number of citizens' groups, the authors argue that tax reforms' potentiality for "non-reformist reforms" can only be unleashed if tax issues are dealt with phenomenologically, seeing problems the way people in the community see them; if organizing takes place from the local level up and if tax issues are made part of a broader-based community organizing effort.

SCIENCE AND SOCIETY, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Fall 1974)

SHEILA DELANY, *"Substructure and Superstructure: The Politics of Allegory in the Fourteenth Century."* Delany traces the rejection of analogical argument and allegorical representation, and the accompanying gradual development of secular realism and naturalism by medieval intelligentsia in the fields of cosmology, logic, physics, poetry, political theory, and the visual arts. She emphasizes the complex relation of this cultural development with the general transition from feudalism to capitalism, and shows how the cultural movement is a response to new social needs occasioned by the historical transformation. JOHN EATWELL, *"Controversies in the Theory of Surplus Value: Old and New."* This article examines the development of the "transformation problem"—the link between "values" and the "price of production"—as it appears in theories of value and the origin of suprlus. Adam Smith's and Ricardo's statements of the problem of the standard of value are presented, as is Marx's critical reformulation of the theory of value in political economy. Finally, Pier Sraffa's improvements upon Marx (*Production of Commodities by Means of Commodities*) are presented as a basis for continuation of the development of work on the problem. PHILIP S. FONER, *"A Labor Voice for Black Equality: The 'Boston Daily Evening Voice,' 1864-1867."* Foner focuses on one of the post-Civil War labor publications which took an exceptional stand on the particular issue of the role of white labor with respect to free black workers. Until it folded for financial reasons, the *Voice* was the only paper to champion the cause of unity of black and white labor on the basis of equality in all areas of American life. E.I. BITSAKIS, *"Symmetry and Contradiction."* A treatment of the symmetries of classical physics—the laws of invariance and conservation—in the light of Lenin's conceptions (and more generally, those of Marx and Engels) on contradiction.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES, Vol. 22, No. 1 (March 1973)

NORMAN GIRVAN, *"The Development of Dependency Economics in the Caribbean and Latin America: Review and Comparison."* Girvan traces the history of the concept of "dependency" as it emerged in Caribbean and Latin American schools and the redefinition of the international economic system. He looks at how the rejection of the primary-product exporting model and disenchantment with the case for industrialization led to regional economic integration schools. He concludes with caveats about integration into the socialist economic system as a means for overcoming underdevelopment while eschewing the goal of imitation of metropolitan consumption patterns by the periphery. ANIBAL PINTO and JAN KNAKAL, *"The Center-Periphery System Twenty Years Later."* In the article's review of changes in the world economy since 1950, focusing especially on center-periphery relations in Latin America, it is argued that processes of both "marginalization" and "dependent insertion" have occurred. This conceptualization is more useful than A.G. Frank's "development of underdevelopment" or Fernando Cardoso's "dependent development" because it identifies decreased importance of the periphery to the center because of increased integration of central economies (marginalization) yet increased importance of the center's capital investment and credit in the periphery and the "foreignization" within all sectors of the peripheral economy (dependent insertion). The authors have not seen the necessity of modifying Raul Prebisch's

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original "center-periphery" notion to include a concept of "semi-periphery" as others such as Immanuel Wallerstein have done. One of their points concerning future options for the periphery, that of progressive cohesion of the periphery and development of greater scope for manoueverability created by internal differentiation of the center and external expansion of the socialist system, presents a framework for analysis of current developments within the peripheral economies. HAVELOCK BREWSTER, *"Economic Dependence: A Quantitative Interpretation."* The author argues in this brief and disjointed article that quantitative indicators must be developed for the measure of dependence. The indicators should be able to show the possibility of endogenous manipulation of the functioning of the system by relating functional variables such as employment, wage rates, exports, import ratio, etc. He also develops a simplistic "stage theory" of the response of public officials in the periphery to their own inability to change their dependent status. ANDRES BIANCHI, *"Notes on the Theory of Latin American Economic Development."* After sketching the traditional two-stage theory of twentieth-century economic development in Latin America, the raw-material export phase up until the Great Depression followed by import substitution, Bianchi notes that the schema applies only to the more developed nations of Latin America and even then underestimates the amount of industrial development prior to the 1930s. He goes on to develop a theory of the necessity of exports as impetus for industrialization in Latin American nations and argues that the sluggish rate of growth of exports as well as the stability of the share of primary products in the export structure has prevented Latin American economic development. CELSO FURTADO, *"The Brazilian 'Model'."* The worldwide diffusion of technical progress and resulting increases in productivity have not liquidated underdevelopment. The structure of consumption and production in Brazil is comprised of the diversified basket of goods consumed by the modernized minority and the traditional basket consumed by the "marginalized" masses; these are produced by MNC and national industry respectively and generate distinct markets. Brazilian economic policies encourage expansion in MNC production of durable goods and thus exacerbate social and economic inequalities between the modernized and marginal sectors. OSVALDO SUNKEL, *"Transitional Capitalism and National Disintegration in Latin America."* Building on Pinto and Knakal's basic schema, Sunkel argues that simultaneous marginalization and trans-national integration are occurring in the structure (economic, political, cultural, social) of peripheral Latin American nations. He links this process of national disintegration to an analysis of the structure and functioning of the trans-national conglomerate (TRANCO) and the penetration of its subsidiaries into peripheral nations. The various classes within the periphery then are divided into marginalized elements and elements integrated into the international economy through employment, consumption, and life-style. SAMIR AMIN, *"Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa—Their Historical Origins and Contemporary Forms."* Amin analyzes three major regions of black Africa as defined by the type of dependent relations with the international economy in their historical development. His conceptual contribution is the notion of the social formation, a concrete structure which is "organized and characterized by a dominant mode of production which forms the apex of a complex set of subordinate modes of production." He denies the historical and sequential nature of modes of production *per se*, but affirms the notion of historical progress for the totality of the social formation.

SOCIAL PRAXIS, Vol. 4, No. 4 (1973)

CLAUDIO DURAN, *"Chile: Revolution and Counter-revolution."* Duran presents a historical summary of the forces and strategies of the pro- and anti-government groups during the period of the Allende regime. He focuses on the ideological causes of the loss of Chilean middle class support for Allende. AGNES HELLER, *"Theory and Practice: Their Relation to Human Needs."* Heller presents the general problem of the relation between theory and practice as one particular to bourgeois society; its theoretical analysis is both the consequence and the manifestation of the division of labor and of commodity production. The practical significance of theory is shown to depend on its ability to articulate real social needs. These needs are distinguished as: (1) existential, and (2) human needs proper—the non-alienating ones being primarily qualitative, and the alienating ones primarily quantitative. Thus, of the four primary modes of social practice that form to meet these needs—partial reform, general reform, political revolution, and total social revolution—only the last mode is able to break the bounds

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of the "theoretical commodity" by transcending both the structural relation between theory and practice developed in capitalism, as well as its symbiotic connection with the bourgeois structure of needs. Such a realization of the Marxian theory, however, entails the revolutionizing of the way of life as a whole. ETSUKO KAJI, *"The Invisible Proletariat: Working Women in Japan."* This article is a documentary study of the exploitation of working women in Japanese industry. It focuses on the role of sexist ideology in fragmenting potential social consciousness. LARS H. RYDELL and CHARLENE BY RYDELL, *"Poverty: Waning or Waxing?"* This article examines the development in Western societies of both absolute and relative poverty, and the consequences for social dissatisfaction. FRANCO FERRAROTTI, *"Social Information as a Fundamental Requisite for Human Development."* Knowledge is essential for genuine social participation. Exploitation is a problem of "social information" versus "collective information," which media institutions must overcome. CRAIG A. CONLY, *"On the Possibility of Action Beyond Ideology."* The result of the struggle between the ideologies of Liberalism and Marxism will point the way to the "true" theory of action. DOCUMENT: MAO TSE-TUNG, *"On Democratic Centralism."* This is a full translation of the 1962 talk on the relationship between leadership and the masses. Mao discusses the role of the party as mediation between democratically formulated wishes of the masses, and the implementation of those needs. He stresses the primacy of democracy for effective centralism.

SOCIALIST REGISTER (1973)

E.P. THOMPSON, *"An Open Letter to Leszek Kolakowski."* This long essay is Thompson's emotional, theoretical quest for an answer to recent statements made by Kolakowski indicating his lack of willingness to become a part of socialist movements in the West which, in all probability, is a subsequent result of Kolakowski's disappearing faith in the prospects of socialist struggle. The author, with the help of textual analyses of Kolakowski's writings, attempts to pose the questions of whether there are any immanent aspects of Kolakowski's thought that could provide an answer. By implying the possible alternatives, although not answering them positively, Thompson asks Kolakowski to take a position in regard to his socialist convictions. Kolakowski's answer will be published in the *Socialist Register* (1974). RICHARD HYMAN, *"Industrial Conflict and the Political Economy."* This essay is an analysis of the recent rise in numbers and militancy of strikes in Great Britain, both in terms of the effects upon the political economy as a whole and the consciousness of the workers involved. Hyman stresses the need for rank and file organizing and the conservative nature of the union leadership, placing the discussion within the context of hegemonic ideology. The author has included an appendix of principle work stoppages in Great Britain between 1960 and 1971. KEN COATS, *"Socialists and the Labor Party."* HILARY ROSE, *"Up Against the Welfare State: The Claimant Unions."* Rose summarizes the history and experiences of community organizing in Britain which has taken the form of unions created to represent social security claimants. GRAHAM MURDOCK and PETER GOLDING, *"For a Political Economy of Mass Communications."* STEVEN ROSE, JOHN HAMBLEY, and JEFF HAYWOOD, *"Science, Racism and Ideology."* The authors present a solid critique of the racist genetics of Jensen, Schockley, et al. V.G. KIERNAN, *"The Old Alliance: England and Portugal."* Kiernan presents a sketch of the relations between the two former colonial powers, arguing that the relationship has benefitted England while serving to retard Portugal's growth. BASIL DAVIDSON, *"A Report on the Further Liberation of Guiné."* JOHN SAUL, *"Neo-Colonialism vs. Liberation Struggle: Some Lessons from Portugal's African Colonies."* JOE SLOVO, *"Southern Africa: Problems of Armed Struggle."* BEN TUROK, *"South Africa: The Search for a Strategy."* This essay is a thorough attempt to develop a theory of revolution in South Africa which foregoes doctrinaire analyses of the "pure class" or "pure colonial" varities. Turok concludes that the intense polarization of South Africa is fundamentally along race lines, and that Black solidarity is therefore the necessary and wholly positive foundation for revolution. RALPH MILIBAND, *"Stalin and After."* Miliband's review of Medvedev's *Let History Judge* and *De la Démocratie Sociliste* is both sympathetic to, as well as critical of, Medvedev's conclusions regarding the possibilities for a socialist reformation of the Soviet Union. H.L. ROBINSON, *"The Downfall of the Dollar."* RALPH MILIBAND, *"The Coup in Chile."* Miliband analyzes the events in Chile, concluding that institutional forms for the mobilization of the masses should have been developed from the beginning of the Popular Unity government.

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SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, No. 19 (January-March 1974)

ANDREW FEENBERG, *"Socialism in France? The Common Program and the Future of the French Left."* Feenberg discusses the recent alliance between the Communist and Socialist parties of France to obtain power through electoral means. Their strategy attempts to gain support through concessions granted to the middle strata. Yet, once in power the Left faces serious problems: its weakness to counteract the domination by multinational corporations of the domestic economy threatens to undermine the alliance with the middle strata, and the concessions granted to the middle strata fail to address the smoldering issue of workers' control raised by the extra-parliamentary Left in May 1968. While offering no solutions to this antinomy, Feenberg indicates that the extra-parliamentary Left will play an important role in its resolution. JAMES PETRAS, *"Reflections on the Chilean Experience: The Petite Bourgeoisie and the Working Class."* Petras begins with a discussion of the Popular Unity Government's failure to counteract the development of an alliance between the bourgeoisie and the petite bourgeoisie. In the case of the working class, Petras counters the simplistic interpretation which either castigates the Popular Unity for reformist politics or points to the economistic character of the consciousness of the Chilean working class. Instead, he indicates that while initially the working class was economistic, in response to threats from counter-revolutionary elements the working class made demands which transcended capitalist society. Unfortunately, the Popular Unity was not prepared for such a turn and failed to provide any organizational leadership. BARBARA EASTON, *"Socialism and Feminism: I: Toward a Unified Movement."* Pointing to the present separation in the movement of issues concerning socialism and feminism, Easton suggests that socialist organizations ought to formulate a socialist program which integrates problems discussed by women's liberation. This would be a first step toward overcoming the fragmentation of the Left in the U.S. BERKELEY-OAKLAND WOMEN'S UNION, *"Socialism and Feminism: II: The Principles of Unity of the Berkeley-Oakland Women's Union."* ELI ZARETSKY, *"Socialism and Feminism: III: Socialist Politics and the Family."* This is the text of a speech delivered before a meeting of the New American Movement. Zaretsky both summarizes and extends the analysis which appeared in *Socialist Revolution* Nos. 13, 14, and 15, entitled "Capitalism, The Family, and Personal Life." MEMBERS OF THE DE KALB N.A.M., *" 'Revolution and Democracy:' A Critique."* This article offers some criticisms of Boyte and Ackerman's dismissal of electoral strategies as reformist in their article "Revolution and Democracy," which appeared in *Socialist Revolution* No. 16. The group maintains that elections should be taken seriously and used in the development of a radical movement in the U.S. BOYTE and ACKERMAN, *"Reply to John Judis and the De Kalb Criticisms of 'Revolution and Democracy'."*

SOCIALIST THOUGHT AND PRACTICE, Vol. 14, No. 4 (April 1974)

STANE DOLANC, *"Self-Management—Motto of Modern Man."* Dolanc openly criticizes the eight professors of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade for having "done absolutely nothing in this country. . .to promote the development of society, humanism and self-management." The remainder of the article deals with concrete problems such as domestic inflation and economic crisis, and the author argues for the "more rapid advancement of self-management and productive forces" to counteract these. Dolanc is very important politically in Yugoslavia and this paper, given as a speech to the Sixth Meeting of Self-Managers of Yugoslavia on February 17, 1974, can be construed as an "official" criticism of the *Praxis* group and the eight recently fired professors from Belgrade. VLADIMIR MILIC, *"The Technocratic Nature of Capitalism."* Milic outlines the "ideological foundations of technocracy," and criticizes technical rationality as belonging to the highest stage of advanced capitalism, not to a 'post-capitalist' age. Milic likewise criticizes "reifications," relying on Karel Kosik's formulations in *Dialectic of the Concrete*. This is a very important article for a number of reasons. It evidences "official" concern with the problem of "reification" occasioned by technological rationality, something very rare in Eastern Europe. Also, Milic shows clearly that we must still analyze technique and technology as factors of late capitalism, not as a qualitatively different stage of development. Milic has referred approvingly to works by Habermas, Marcuse, Kosik and Offe. The concern with alienation and reification of social relations is not a monopoly of the *Praxis* philosophers in Yugoslavia. Milic exemplifies the "official" recognition of internal systemic contradictions.

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TEL QUEL, No. 54 (Summer 1974)

STEPHEN HEATH, *"Trames de Lecture."* This is an essay on Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake.* PHILIPPE SOLLERS, *"Argument."* JAMES JOYCE, extract of a translation of *Finnegan's Wake.* MARIA ANTONIETTA MACCIOCCHI, *"Pour Gramsci."* This is an essay given publicly at Vincennes in December 1972. The author, an Italian Althusserian, has written a book on Gramsci. She is concerned to "denounce the mystification of which Gramsci has been the object" on the left and the right. She bemoans the lack of critical knowledge of Gramsci in the West, and criticizes a number of writings on him by Roger Garaudy in France and Christian Riechers in Germany. Only Althusser in her view has been the "philosophic spirit the most fascinated by Gramsci," although he, too, is suspect for his identification of Gramsci as an "historicist." Macciocchi, in concluding, echoes Gramsci's phrase, "only the truth is revolutionary." She wants to defend the "philosophy of praxis" against charges that it is simply "pseudo-Marxism," as Riechers puts it. JEAN DAUBIER, *"Ideologie, Pouvoir et Gauchisme en Chine populaire."* SUSAN SONTAG, *"Projet d'un Voyage en Chine."* DANIEL SIBONDY, *"Bifurcations."*

LES TEMPS MODERNES, Nos. 337-338 (1974)

MYRIAM BEN, *"L'enfant à la flûte."* A story. JEAN COLOMBEL, *"Zévaco-Pardaillan."* The nineteenth-century author and journalist Michel Zévaco, creator of one of Sartre's earliest heroes, Pardaillan, is revealed to have been a revolutionary polemicist who fought against the same enemies as Pardaillan himself: the Church, State and Police. LEILA SEBBAR PIGNON, *"Le mythe du bon nègre ou l'ideologie coloniale dans la production romanesque du XVIIIe siècle."* JEAN-MARC LEVY-LEBLOND, *"L'ideologie de-dans la physique contemporaine."* To appear in English in the collection *Ideology in the Sciences* (preliminary title), ed. by Hilary and Steven Rose (Penguin, 1975). ANDREE MICHEL, *"Relation premaritales et conjugales dans la famille urbaine en Pologne, Russie et Bielorussie."* This survey of empirical studies concludes that in the Soviet Union and Poland (1) a double standard for premarital sex still exists, (2) despite official propaganda, domestic roles are still primarily distributed in the traditional manner, (3) propaganda has been most effective in terms of the sharing of authority within the family, (4) the increasing importance of inter-personal relations as a basis for satisfaction in marriage will tend to make marriage more precarious and raise the divorce rate to a level approximating that of the United States. Bibliography. JEANNINE VERDES-LEROUX, *"Le travail des femmes."* An empirical study of women's role in the work force, in education and in politics shows that, contrary to popular myths, women's situation in France has not improved in the last seventy years. NATY GARCIA GUADILLA, *"Realité et utopie d'un movement de libération des femmes en Amerique latine."* Autonomous women's movements are seen as necessary to combat the dominant machismo of Latin-American society. FRANCOIS RIVIERE, *"L'Ecole de Budapest."* A special section on the Hungarian Marxism of Lukács and his students. *"Pour L'Ecole de Budapest."* Introduction with valuable bibliographical notes on Feher, Hegedüs, Heller, György and Maria Markus, and Vajda. *"Prise de position du parti communiste hongrois."* Published in *Telos* 17 (1973), as "Hungarian Party Document." SERGE FRANKEL and DANIEL AMRTIN, *"La nouvelle gauche hongroise: sociologie et révolution."* Published in *Telos* 17 (1973) as "The Budapest School." AGNES HELLER, *"Théorie et practique en fonction des besoins humains."* Published in *Social Praxis*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (1973), as "Theory and Practice: Their Relation to Human Needs." MARIA MARKUS and ANDRAS HEGEDUS, *"Loisir et division du travail."* Leisure and work are so inter-related that a change in one can only be in accordance with a change in the other. A new system of education to raise the cultural level and general technical competence of workers in Hungary would alter the prevailing division of labor so that individuals would receive more satisfaction within their chosen field of employment and would use their leisure time for their own development and self-realization. MIKLOS HARASZTI, *"Le procès Haraszti."* Haraszti's poem in praise of Che and his manuscript recounting experiences of exploitation in a tractor factory led to his trial on charges of subversion. The poem and documents relevant to his case, including the court proceedings, are printed herein.

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TERZO MONDO, Vol. VII, Nos. 24-25 (June-September 1974)

UMBERTO MELOTTI, *"Dipendenza e Sottosviluppo in una Concezione Multilineare del Processo Storico."* SAMIR AMIN, *"Verso una Nuova Crisi Strutturale del Sistema Capitalistico?"* An excellent analysis of the present crisis according to two possible models of further capitalist development. One is based on locating *all* industries at the center while the other allows for "subimperialism." The stress throughout is on the "subjective" moment and the political struggle determining which way capitalism will go. ANTONIO CARLO, *"L'Estinzione dell'Autorità, del Partito e della Categorie Economiche."* A reexamination of key Marxist notions in the light of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. ELIAS CONDAL, *"Bolivia '70."* A socio-economic analysis of modern Bolivian society. MARIO AGLIERI RINELLA, *"La Cooperazione Technical Israeliana con i Paesi in Via di Sviluppo."* A positive evaluation of Israel's foreign assistance to underdeveloped countries. EUGENIO TURRI, *"Società e Ambiente."* A sociological analysis of the ecological crisis.

THEORY AND SOCIETY, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Fall 1974)

ALAN BLUM, *"Positive Thinking."* Blum gives a neo-Platonic critique of positivism. DICK HOWARD, *"A Politics in Search of the Political."* Habermas' latest book, *Legitimations-probleme im Spätkapitalismus*, is discussed by Howard and placed within the overall framework of Habermas' previous work. Habermas maintains that because of the changes which have occcurred in the shift from liberal to late capitalism, Marx's theory of economic crises must be altered. Because of political manipulation of the market which substitutes permanent inflation for the "crash," crises no longer occur in an economic form but, instead, as a problem of legitimation. Howard also briefly discusses the work of others associated with Habermas at the Max Plank Institute, and concludes by raising a few problems with Habermas' theory. R.R. ALFORD and R. FRIEDLAND, *"Nations, Parties and Participation."* This is a lengthy critical review of an anthology entitled *Citizens, Elections, Parties*, edited by Stein Rokkan. PIERRE HEGY, *"Words of Power: The Power of Words."* Hegy poses two different interpretations of language: is language "the expression. . . of the eternal categories of Reason," or is it "the product of a people's evolution and history?" Through an analysis of the meaning expressed through words in different languages, which vary even though they signify the same object, Hegy decides in favor of the second view. DAVID SILVERMAN, *"Speaking Seriously: Part II."* This is the second part of an article which began in Vol. 1, No. 1, in which Silverman discusses the relation betwen authority and speech. IVAN LIGHT, *"Reassessments of Sociological History: C. Wright Mills and the Power Elite."* This is a lengthy critical review of *New American Society* by Joseph Bensman and Arthur J. Vidich which attempts to bring Mills' sociological theory up to date.

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